

This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

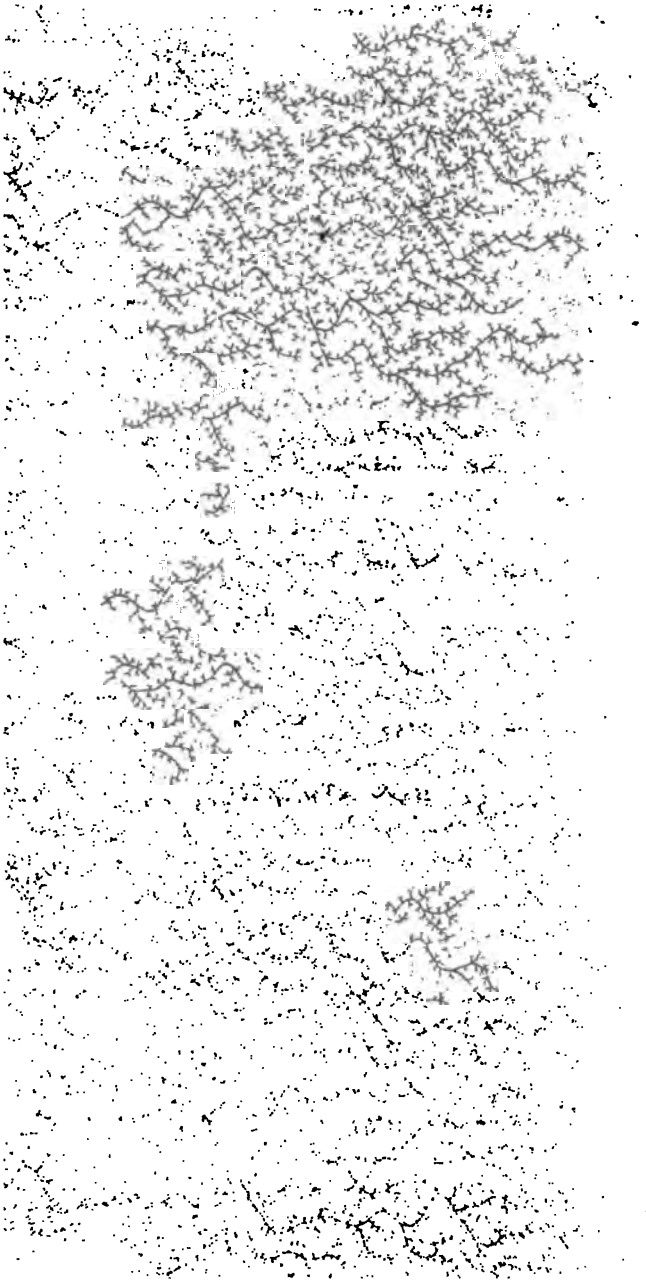
+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

3 3433 07602404 5



LIFE

AND ITS AIMS:

IN

TWO PARTS.

PART FIRST—IDEAL LIFE.

PART SECOND—ACTUAL LIFE.

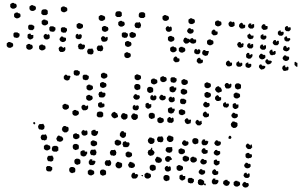


PHILADELPHIA:
LIPPINCOTT, GRAMBO & CO.
1854.

Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1854, by

LIPPINCOTT, GRAMBO & CO.,

in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.



PREFACE.

LIFE is a mystery, which, though we earnestly seek to solve, ever baffles investigation. But this fact should not deter us from using our utmost endeavors to discover its bearings and possible results. It is a subject of vital importance to each of us, and its proper use and ultimate perfection should be our constant aim.

With the hope that the following pages may lead some careless minds to a timely reflection, this volume is offered to the Public, by

THE AUTHOR.

PHILADELPHIA, APRIL, 1854.

NEW YORK
PUBLIC
LIBRARY

LIFE AND ITS AIMS.

PART FIRST.

IDEAL LIFE.

CHAPTER FIRST.

"Come, girls, what shall I be?" cried Frank Clifford, as he eagerly drew his chair to the table where his sisters were at work.

"Oh, a lawyer!" exclaimed Ellen, with a proud toss of her head.

"A lawyer? and why?"

"Why? for every thing. A lawyer is always so much of a gentleman, and so much respected and looked up to, and so talented, and lives so well, and is almost always handsome."

"Handsome! I didn't know that a profession made a man handsome."

"Well, but it does. I don't know why, unless it is that they always dress well, and look so happy, and have nothing to trouble them; while doctors are forever in a hurry, have scarcely time to bow to you, and look so wise and solemn; and you always know what they are going to talk about. Every one

naturally says, 'Well, doctor, what promise is there of a healthy season?' or, 'Much sickness about, doctor?' and then comes a long list of fevers, deaths, and accidents; and even if you *are* interested, it is in the sufferers, and not in the doctor. I don't see how any one *can* marry a doctor!"

"You have no objection to being a lawyer's wife, then?"

"I may object to the one, without wishing to be the other," returned Ellen, indignantly. "You boys always suppose we are thinking of nothing else but marriage; but you are very much mistaken. Do you think we are nothing *in* ourselves, or *for* ourselves?"

"Indeed, good sister, so high an opinion have I of your fair sex, that without more ado, and if for no reason in the world but that I may marry a pretty girl, I forthwith decide to be a lawyer — unless, indeed," turning to his other sister, "Mary can say something equally flattering for the poor doctors."

"No, I think very much as Ellen does about them," replied Mary. "They belong to the community, and seem to have no home. You never see them sitting quietly by their own fireside, or riding out with their children. I pity Susan H.; she might as well not have a father. I asked her the other day if he thought she had improved in her music since our new teacher came, and she laughed outright at the idea, and said that she did'nt believe he knew any thing about her learning at all."

"Sad, indeed! I see I must give up my cause; I fancied that it would look so well, 'Frank Clifford, M. D.,'" and the evidently disappointed Frank

mused moodily for a moment, and then disconsolately added, "Well, if you two agree so exactly, you must be right; and there is nothing left for me but to be a lawyer."

"I did not say that I agreed with Ellen about lawyers, Frank, for I don't think that they are so entertaining, or so very happy. There is Mr. D. He is always talking, to be sure, but it is about politics, who the next President is to be, or the next Senator, or who has just made a great speech, and what it was, or what *he* thinks of it, and why this man is liked, and that one not. *I* think him both tiresome and conceited."

"So do I," said Ellen; "but there can be an exception, can there not?"

"Yes, and it may be the exception that you like; but all lawyers are not like Harry Selden's father. There is Mr. G., so pompous and self-sufficient, as if he expected every one to make way for him; and Mr. P., with his bland smiles and fair words, is no better. I have no faith in lawyers; I always think that they have a motive in what they say; and were I a tradesman, I am sure I would never trust one. Who ever hears of a doctor's debts, or a minister's, or any body's else but a lawyer's? they are always owing somebody. I should really be afraid to marry a lawyer, I should never feel certain whether I were rich or poor."

"Why trouble about that," returned Ellen, "so long as they have all they want, as lawyers' families always seem to have. Look at the D.'s, and the G.'s, and the P.'s; none live better than they do, their houses are the handsomest in the city, the girls have

every thing they wish, enjoy the best advantages, and are the best educated. There is a polish and refinement to every thing about them."

"I grant that there is an appearance of all this; but although their education may be more showy, it does not follow that it is the best or the one most calculated to make them happy. It always seems to me that every thing is for effect. They are ambitious of appearing well, and are more influenced by what the world will think, than by what is right or pleasant. Now in a minister's family it is so different; look at the C.'s for instance, all so cheerful and good-natured; every one likes to go there. There is no style, to be sure; but what is style, if they are contented and happy?" said the sweet-toned, gentle Mary.

"Well, one thing is evident, if I listen to you girls I shall never be any thing; for I am not good enough to be a minister, or bad enough to be a lawyer; and to be a doctor is out of the question, he is too ill-bred and disagreable! Oh, dear me! what shall I be?" cried the disheartened Frank.

"Be yourself—a college boy," said his father, who, with his paper before him, and apparently reading it, had, however, been intently listening to the conversation of his children. "The man makes the profession, not the profession the man."

"You differ from the girls, there, papa, for Ellen goes so far as to say that the profession makes you handsome or ugly, which is of vast importance to a young fellow; and Mary says that it makes you either good or bad, which is something, too; but,

according to them, I can be neither a doctor, lawyer, nor minister."

"Well, then, be a merchant."

"A merchant!" exclaimed Ellen, with visible horror; "what, sell tape and measure calico? Oh, papa, our Frank a merchant!"

"Throw away my education, my Latin, my Greek, all hope, life itself?" cried Frank, "and all for what?"

"Who are our richest men? who have more power?" asked Mr. Clifford. "But there are other employments," he added. "Be an artist."

"I have no taste," replied Frank.

"And artists are so pale and sickly," observed Ellen.

"Go into the Navy, then."

"Horrible!" cried Mary; "be away from home two or three years at a time."

"Join the Army."

"To fight with Indians, to be stationed on the frontiers, to be eaten up by the mosquitoes, or to die of yellow fever! Thank you, papa, but you must proffer more tempting bait than that, or you will have me for ever upon your hands," returned Frank, laughing.

"The longer the better, my dear boy," said his father, who had very little wish to see him any thing but a mere gentleman of leisure. "And now can the girls, who seem to know so well what *you* are not to be, tell me what *they* would like to be? Come, Mary, what will you be?'

"A loving daughter, papa," said the sweet, gentle

voice, while the soft, blue eyes beamed with affection.

"Yes," said the fond father, as he kissed her upturned face, "loving and gentle to all; and my pretty Ellen, what will she be?" turning to his eldest daughter as he spoke, and passing his hand through the silken ringlets that shadowed her beautiful brow.

"A great belle, papa."

"You are a saucy girl," said he, pinching the dimpled cheek; "but you all have my sincere wishes that success may attend your aims: that Frank may become a handsome and distinguished man, Ellen a notoriously-cruel flirt, and Mary meet her sure reward in sweet, requited love."

"Oh, papa, how ridiculous you make us appear," they all exclaimed, as with a pleasant "good morning" he left the room.

For a time all were silent, absorbed in their own reflections. At length Frank exclaimed, "I wish I were a girl, with nothing to do but—"

"Indeed, indeed, Frank," said Ellen, "it is not so easy as you suppose. It is just as hard to be a fascinating woman as a successful man."

At that moment a loud ring of the bell announced a visitor; and immediately after, a remarkably kind and benevolent-looking gentleman entered the apartment.

"It is uncle George," they all exclaimed with great delight. "Oh, uncle George, we are so glad to see you."

"Oh, yes, you always say so; but give me a proof of it this morning," he said, kissing the pouting lips that were half offered, and then laughingly withdrawn.

"Girls, behave yourselves; you must not make such a noise. Pray, Mr. Gray, do take a seat."

"Ah, Mrs. Clifford, good morning. You must excuse the liberty I take, but you know these girls have grown up under my eye, and seem almost as much mine as yours."

"They certainly owe a great deal of their happiness to you, Mr. Gray; but do take a seat."

"Thank you, not this morning. I have a favour to ask of a great many of my friends to-day, for I want to borrow their young people to welcome the New Year at Primrose Hall. Come girls, come Frank, beg your mother to lend you to me."

"Thank you, thank you, uncle George; mamma, you will let us go, won't you?"

"Certainly, with great pleasure; but I pity Mr. Gray, if this is a sample of your behaviour."

"Let them alone for that; they know how to make glad a lone man's heart. But good morning, I must hunt up my other children; mind, girls, be early."

"Oh, how delightful!" exclaimed Ellen, as the door closed upon him.

"I wonder if the Chaunceys will be there," said Mary.

"Of course," replied Frank; "and the Seldens, and Fred. I hope the sleighing will be good; we shall have capital fun; but I must have a new buffalo robe."

"And we must finish our new hoods," said the girls; and thus their plans for the far-off future were exchanged for the more definite ones of the present.

CHAPTER SECOND.

THE New Year was welcomed by many happy hearts, for all loved to visit at uncle George Gray's, as he was universally called by his young friends. Mr. Gray had been in childhood the playmate of their parents, and seemed almost to have transferred his affection for them to their children. He had early been distinguished for talent and cultivation; but inheriting a large fortune from his father, he became a looker-on rather than an actor in the busy strife around him for fame and wealth. He thus acquired that knowledge of life which is usually won only from the struggles of a hard experience, without the accompanying wear and tear of heart, which so tends to deaden the feelings, and destroy almost our humanity. No one, therefore, was better able to advise and comfort; no one so well adapted to instruct the young, whose present happiness and future welfare appeared to be the chief object of his life. It was no wonder, then, that each day spent at Primrose Hall became a day to be remembered—one of those bright spots upon life's surface which can never be obliterated. And this New Year day in particular promised much fruit, for it dawned in beauty. The flying white clouds, so portentous of coming snow, contrasted finely with the clear, blue sky around them, even as their own trivial anxieties, those harbingers of future care and sorrow, served but to make the sunny present the more bright and

beautiful. Mr. Clifford's "Happy New Year," therefore, to the young party about leaving his door, was a superfluous wish. For how could it be otherwise?

"Are you sure those cloaks are warm enough," he continued; "remember you will have a long, cold ride to-night."

"Oh, quite warm enough, papa; besides only see what a bundle of shawls mamma has had put into the sleigh, and foot-stoves, too," they cried.

"I hope you will be careful and not forget to have them heated before you return," said the anxious mother; but she was only answered by a merry laugh and the jingle of bells, as they dashed gaily down the street.

"Why, Frank, you have turned the wrong corner," cried Mary.

"Oh, I forgot to tell you," returned he, "that uncle George begged me to bring Susan Gray with us, as she has no one to drive her."

"And there she is at the window," cried Mary, "all ready and waiting for us."

"He didn't forget to tell *her*," said Ellen, laughing.

"Stop, Susan, I will give you the back seat, it is the warmest," said Mary.

"Yes, but not so pleasant," exclaimed Frank, eagerly; "I want Susan to see the skaters."

"And sit by him," whispered Ellen, mischievously; "I hope our driver won't forget his proper occupation."

The new buffalo was now called into requisition, and nobly did its part. Its ample folds were soon wound carefully around that delicate form, promising as of themselves a sure protection. The very bells

seemed, at least to Frank, to become more musical, as if now, indeed, all was harmony. And so thought every one that chanced to meet them; for such happy faces, such bright smiles, such merry voices, such a pretty sleigh, and such a handsome driver, were not often seen. The sleighing was excellent, and it did indeed appear to be a day of rejoicing, for many parties were met, many kindly greetings and "Happy New Years" exchanged, and all seemed to forget that the old year was not dead, but gone (for the actions of the past live forever), and that the new year, which they now so warmly welcomed, would prove in one short twelvemonth to have been but another chapter in the same book—a progression but not a change.

Distant shouts, mingled with confused peals of triumph, announced that they approached the skaters.

"How beautiful!" cried all, as the scene burst suddenly upon their sight. Boys, lads, and men, grouped variously together, as for a fine effect; and for a time the eye knew not where to rest. At length one group in particular attracted the general attention. It consisted of a company of little boys of eight or nine years of age, who had been selected from among the rest, and were now to test their comparative skill. Certain evolutions were to be made; and he who performed them all, and well, was to be rewarded with a prize.

They started for the goal. One soon lagged behind, another lost a skate, and a third tripped and fell. At last all had left the ranks but two; one a gaily dressed, handsome boy, with light curling hair and bright blue eyes, of whom one might well be

proud; but there was an anxious desire to win imprinted upon his face, that made you fear there was too much of the seriousness of man's ambition implanted in his youthful heart; so that, although you could not but admire his easy and graceful attitude, you yet turned with pleasure to gaze upon his rival, who, clad in a coarse brown suit, gloveless and hatless (for he had lost his cap in the chase), wore upon his beaming countenance the sunny smile of childhood. Innocent merriment shot from his sparkling black eye, and the loud laugh seemed ready to burst from his lips. The interest of the spectators was intense; for equal as they were in strength and agility, it could only be by a false step or some such accident that either could be pronounced the winner. As they approached the goal, near which was conspicuously placed the prize, our little hero of the handsome dress proved too weak for temptation; he turned to throw a wistful glance upon what he hoped so soon to call his own, and the little bright face shot on before him. A thunder of applause proclaimed the victory; but, alas! it was followed by a low cry of pain; for the little victor, while clapping his hands in childish glee, had lost his balance and fallen.

"A fractured limb!" was echoed on every side.

"Oh, for a doctor!" cried Susan, "where can we get a doctor?"

Frank had started from his seat; but what could *he* do? A doctor was nowhere to be found, and now the child was getting cold, and must be taken home, but how?

Frank glanced eagerly at Susan, and his sisters. Their glistening eyes gave token of sympathy,

and he was answered by a quick desertion of the sleigh. The little boy, with an elder brother, who cried piteously over him, were soon placed within it. The new buffalo again performed its part, and the sleigh turned towards the city. A half hour had already passed, and the girls, almost frozen with the cold, were bitterly lamenting their cloaks, "wishing they had followed papa's advice and worn their old ones," when an approaching sleigh caused them to turn.

"I hope it is Frank. No, it is the Seldens," they exclaimed.

"Why, girls, what are you doing here, and all alone? Are not you going to uncle George's?"

The matter was soon explained and commented upon.

"Well, I hope Frank will come soon; you look almost frozen. Here, Charles, give Ellen your seat," cried Harry Selden, "and you stay and take care of the other girls. I am sorry that I can't offer mine to one of you, but I, you know, must drive."

"You can have mine, though," cried Carry, "for you look so very cold."

"And mine, too," said Emma, "if mamma had not made me promise not to step upon the snow."

"Thank you, thank you, but Frank will be here soon."

"No matter if he is, it will be a pleasant change," said Harry; "here, Ellen, give me your hand," and suiting the action to the word, he drew her into the seat beside him. Carry had already abandoned her's, but neither Mary nor Susan seemed disposed to take it, each insisting that the other needed it most. At

length, however, it was settled; for Susan declared "that she really was *so* anxious to hear about the little boy, that she did not mind the cold at all." Ellen laughed, and Mary accepted the proffered seat.

"So much for one's feelings," said Harry, as they left the scene; "Susan wouldn't miss a ride with Frank if Jack Frost himself were pulling at her nose."

It was well, too, that Mary and Emma were such good friends, and had so much to talk about, for they seemed entirely forgotten by Harry and Ellen. Harry had just returned from College for a week's vacation, and had a thousand innocent scrapes and hare-brained adventures to tell of. He was, too, an ambitious boy, and hoped to take the first honor; but there was some little dread of a rival, and Ellen must hear the why and the wherefore, for of course she must be interested; and so, indeed, she seemed. Who could be otherwise?

Harry was the favourite son of one of the most eminent lawyers of Boston. His childhood had given promise of a brilliant future; and his friends deemed it impossible that he could take any other than the highest place. Their hopes and wishes had incited him to unusual exertion, and thus far he had fulfilled their fondest anticipations.

Man may bend circumstances to his will, but circumstances too often make the boy. Flatter a child for his beauty; he becomes vain, conceited, lost. Flatter him on account of his wit; he becomes a buffoon. Praise his efforts at school, his love of books and of study, and you implant the tastes you attribute to him. Such had been Harry's lot. His

father had trained him for greatness, and could he disappoint him? Ellen, too, was not she the fittest companion for such a boy? Was she not the prettiest of all the girls? So at least Harry appeared to think; for having first unburdened his own thoughts, a characteristic of his sex, and received her true woman's sympathy in exchange, he turned and gazed with wonder at the new beauties that dwelt upon that beautiful face. It was not an expression of love and sympathy merely that attracted him, but one of conscious pride, as if his elevation had involved her own. He felt that his ambitious hopes had indeed found an echo in her gentle bosom, and that she was worthy of him.

"Why, Ellen," he exclaimed, "you grow prettier every day, or that is a most becoming hood."

"You know cherry is your favorite color," said Ellen, blushing.

"No, I like carnation much better," returned Harry, laughingly. The carnation deepened.

"Look, Harry," cried his sister, "is not that Fred Harvey running on before us?"

"Yes; he is cold, and running to get himself warm."

"It is a pity he is poor," said Mary.

"He is a fine fellow, though," replied Harry, "and loves a drive as well as any one. Holloa, Fred, come, take a ride with us."

"No, I thank you, you have no room. I will run along-side."

"Yes there is a plenty of room, you know I like to drive standing. You go to uncle George's, don't you?"

"Yes."

"Well, jump in. Girls, what say you to a longer ride; I want to show Fred what a splendid horse I have."

"The longer the better," cried all. The sleigh was turned in a new direction, making a lengthened circuit around Primrose Hall, where, however, they were soon warming themselves around a large wood fire. Mr. Gray disdained furnaces, stoves, &c.

"And this is what you call an early visit, is it?" cried he; "you have been enjoying yourselves at my expense, I suspect. Come, tell me the whole story, where you have been, and how you happened to come in that direction."

"I only took a turn through the lane to give Fred a New Year's drive," said Harry.

"Fred? how came he to be with you, and these girls? It seems to me that you are an oddly mixed party."

"We picked them all up," said Harry, laughing; "the girls first, and Fred afterwards."

"The girls! and where is Frank? and Susan?" Mr. Gray looked anxiously around; for Susan Gray, the only child of a deceased brother, was the idol of his heart. The tinkling of bells, however, now announced their arrival, and he soon folded her in his arms.

"Why, my dear child, how cold you are! How is it that you are so much colder than the others?"

The cause was soon explained. Frank had not only taken the little boy home, but, pitying the poor distressed mother, had gone in search of a physician, and taken him to the suffering child. He now spoke

eloquently of the mother's agony, of the doctor's arrival, of her gratitude, and of the boy's relief.

"How much good a doctor can do!" said Susan.

"Do you think so?" asked Frank; "do you like doctors?"

"Yes; they have so many opportunities of doing good. I am sure they must feel well rewarded by the gratitude they meet with. A doctor is always so much beloved by his patients."

Frank was satisfied, let his sisters say what they would; and once more "Frank Clifford, M. D.," blazed in bright effulgence before him. How often accidents determine our future course!

A merry party were now assembled, for there had been other arrivals, and the room was full. The New Year cake gave great satisfaction, and was quickly dispatched; and all now amused themselves according to their peculiar tastes, for every thing calculated to amuse and instruct was to be found at Primrose Hall. Some seized the backgammon box, others the chess-board. One party flocked around the piano, another examined the numerous engravings, or gazed upon the paintings that adorned the walls. Mr. Gray had also been a great traveller, and collected together quite a roomful of curiosities from all parts of the world; and of this curiosity shop, as he termed it, no one ever tired. And so the morning flew away, and all were astonished and almost disappointed when dinner was announced. The dinner, however, it must be remembered, was a New Year one, and such a one, too, as they had not often seen. For Mr. Gray spared no pains to please his guests. Let us, therefore, leave them to the enjoyment of it.

CHAPTER THIRD.

It had always been a custom of Mr. Gray whenever his young friends dined with him, to prepare some surprise for their afternoon entertainment—something for their improvement as well as pleasure; and as usual, it had been a constant theme of wonder during the morning, "what uncle George could possibly think of, that was new." Therefore, when the table-cover was at length removed, they all turned eagerly towards him, as if awaiting the announcement.

"Yes, my children," he smilingly replied to their enquiring glances, "I have something prepared for you. What say you to a lottery?"

"A lottery! a lottery!" they all exclaimed in great delight.

"Yes," he continued, "I have done my part; the prizes are all prepared, for there are to be no blanks."

"Delightful!" cried all; "blanks make you feel so foolish. Anything is better than a blank."

"I am glad you are pleased," continued Mr. Gray; "but you must now produce your chances."

"What is a chance?" asked one.

"And how can we get them?" asked another.

"Come with me, and you shall know what, and how, and have the means, too," he replied.

Eagerly they crowded after him as he led the way

to his library; and walking to his desk, produced them pen, ink, and paper.

"Now," said he, "listen to me. Life is a lottery, and we all have chances in it, although we may not know our number, or the prize we may obtain. Some look for fame, some for wealth, some for pleasure. All of us, when young, have our peculiar idea of happiness, the realization of which constitutes our prize; and the abilities which we possess to attain our end, are our chances."

All was hushed and still. The wild tumult of delight was silenced. A very different lottery this, from the one they had anticipated.

"You look grave, my children," continued Mr. Gray, "and you have much cause to do so. You are now all of you just at that period of life upon which your future seems to turn. It is true you are not yet very far advanced upon the stream of time, and you have the opportunity to pause and consider. You may change the object of your pursuit, develop new faculties, cultivate new tastes, abandon bad habits — in a word, exchange the chances in life's lottery which you have already selected. For, as I have said, there are no blanks; and whether for good or evil, the tree will bear its fruit. Come, now, there is work before you. I want your characters, mental, moral, and physical. Each take a sheet of paper, and there is the dining table for your common desk."

"What, write our own characters, and put our own names to them, uncle George?"

"Yes; be off with yourselves. All must bring something."

What a confusion of tongues! One thought "it was a queer notion;" another "was so much disappointed, he had hoped for such a real nice lottery;" some "that it was no fun at all;" while others were thoughtful, for the subject struck them in the true light, and the light sobered them.

"What are we to write?" asked one.

"I am sure I don't know," said another.

"The mischief is, I have no talent to write about," said a third. "Now Harry Selden can make out a good story."

"No, indeed," cried Harry; "who wants to praise himself? not I."

"Uncle George would turn it against you if you did."

"You write mine, and I will write yours," said Charles Selden to Richard Chauncey.

"Agreed; here you have it: 'Charles Selden, a keen fellow at a bargain; ambitious of being a great merchant.'"

"And yours: 'Richard Chauncey, full of fun, loves a joke, and is ambitious of being called a wit.'"

Bedlam was let loose; the fire of raillery shot here, there, and every where. At length amid the hum of voices, one was heard despondingly to say, "I never thought about my character or talents, or any thing else. I wonder uncle George should think of such a thing."

"Oh, I can write yours: 'a lazy, good-for-nothing fellow, who loves to eat and sleep. Your reward will be to die and be buried.'"

"Shame! shame!" cried some, while others laughed.

At that moment the door opened, and Mr. Gray

appeared. "I am glad," he said, "that you find your occupation so pleasant, and your task so light. All finished?" he asked. "Give them to me."

But no papers were placed in his extended hand; and in apparent astonishment he glanced around. "What, not one ready?"

"How can we write our own characters, uncle George? If we praise ourselves, the others will all laugh; and no one likes to write against himself."

"And half of us have no talents at all, nor characters either," cried another.

"You mistake there, my boy; we all have talents, although we may have buried them; and we all have a character to others, if not to ourselves."

"That is the trouble. I know what every body's else is, but I don't know my own."

"Exactly so," said Mr. Gray; "and that is one thing I wished to teach you, that while we are ignorant of our own abilities, talents, progress, &c., supposing our characters not yet formed, others have already weighed and judged us. Our chances for the future are determined before we have realized that the time to prepare them has arrived. Every hour from the first in which we drew our breath tells upon the future, and makes us what we are. Others judge us insensibly to themselves by the traits exhibited in the nursery, in the school-room, and at College. This should show you all of what importance it is not to neglect the season of youth, for it is the seed-time of life, and all must reap what they have sown. But come, while we talk time is passing. Let us now try another plan. Form yourselves into two parties, and let the characters of the members

of one company be written by the members of the other. Be fair and honest."

This proved, indeed, as he had predicted, a very different matter. There was some little discussion, to be sure; but it was pretty evident that all had a very just idea of the prominent traits of each. The shades of difference being soon adjusted, the tickets were neatly copied by the best writers, and confided to the safe keeping of Mr. Gray. Tea was now served, but scarcely tasted, for all were curious and anxious to know the character awarded them. The rewards and prizes were no longer thought of. How the current of their thoughts had changed! It was not future greatness or pleasure that now occupied their minds, but the present appreciation of themselves; and all secretly wished they could have foreseen this trial, and been prepared to meet it.

And now they adjourned to the drawing-room. There sat uncle George in a large arm-chair, with a small table before him, upon which were placed two covered baskets.

"Do read mine last, uncle George," cried one almost spasmodically, the very reading it at all appearing most woful to him.

"Well, read mine first," cried another, "for then I shall be at ease to laugh at the rest."

"As life, so must this lottery be," said Mr. Gray: "for as we cannot know whose character will be first formed, whose future first determined, neither do we know whose chance shall first be drawn."

The drawing now commenced. A ticket from one basket, taken at random, told the name and

character of one of the party, who immediately rising, received from Mr. Gray his appropriate reward, and turning to the others, read it aloud. It was a severe conflict of pride and temper; a trial to the nerves, if not to the feelings, of all, for all were disappointed. Although some were careless and merry, concealing their chagrin by a sneer or a joke, others were thoughtful, and some angry. A true mirror had been held up before them, and they saw themselves as others saw them.

Mr. Gray, however, after speaking words of wisdom and comfort to them, produced two other boxes, containing those real substantial proofs of affection so prized by both old and young. These he distributed among them, presenting with true kindliness of heart the handsomest and most valuable to those who had been the most severely used; thus obliterating, in part, the feelings of previous mortification and chagrin.

It would consume too much of our time and space to record the characters and rewards of all. A glance into Mr. Selden's drawing-room must, therefore, suffice to show the nature and effect of Mr. Gray's lottery.

"And what is Harry to be?" asked Mr. Selden, as his children were eagerly relating the evening's entertainment to him.

"A lawyer, to be sure."

"But Harry does not seem quite satisfied," said his father; "what better do you wish, my son?"

"He didn't like his ticket, only he won't say so," observed his brother.

"It is no such thing," returned Harry; "what do I care for what boys think?"

"Let me judge," said Mr. Selden, holding out his hand for the ticket. "Give me the reward, too," he continued, as Harry, with evident reluctance, produced them.

"Harry Selden. — A lucky fellow, born with fair talents, and a father to push him along. Ambitious of fame.

"Reward.—A successful, but laborious career, distinguished in public life, and worshipped by the masses, but weary and unsatisfied in himself."

"Nonsense," said Mr. Selden, abruptly quitting the room. In spite of himself, he was annoyed.

"What were the Cliffords' chances?" asked Mrs. Selden, wishing to turn the subject.

"Oh, Ellen's was capital. Her ticket was: 'Beautiful and proud.' — Her reward: 'Apparent splendor, but a weary heart.' She didn't like it at all."

Harry kicked the dog that was fawning upon him, and taking a book, began to read.

CHAPTER FOURTH.

In the beautiful village of Roxbury there is a small cottage, plain and simple, compared to the many pretentious ones around it. Let us enter. A bright fire blazes in the cheerful grate. A lady of fine, delicate features sits beside it. She is quietly sewing, but glances from time to time upon a youth who, at the farthest end of the room, is gazing vacantly from the window, his mind evidently occupied with other objects than those which meet his eyes. It is a striking face to look upon; and no wonder that the mother's gaze is one of pride and love; for although the noble brow, indicative of the brightest intellect, is now clouded as with troubled thought, yet the mouth, so expressive of pure and lofty sentiments, gives sure token that the tangled web is of a perplexing, not of an injurious character.

The youth had thus remained for near an hour, his mother carefully observing him, but making no remark. She now spoke.

"Frederick!"

He started, and then resumed his position.

"You are thoughtful," she continued; "are your thoughts such as a mother might share?"

"I am not thinking, mother, but feeling, and feeling keenly."

"The more need, then, of sympathy and guidance," she said; and for the first time her glance

assumed an anxious cast, but in a moment it was gone, giving place to that habitual expression of placid trust which was the peculiar charm of Mrs. Harvey's face. Frederick had not spoken, and she continued:

"It was late when you returned last night, and you did not tell me much of the day's amusement. Did anything occur that was unpleasant to you?"

"No, mother, not exactly unpleasant, but——" he hesitated, and then abruptly said, "I told you of the lottery?"

"Yes; are you dissatisfied with the character given you? I thought it a very correct one: 'A hard student,' was it not? 'and a good son.'"

"No, not dissatisfied, for I know I am the first, and I try to be the last."

"And so you are," said the mother, looking fondly through her tears. "There could not be a better."

Frederick now rose and drew a chair to the little work-table at which she was sitting. "A good mother makes a good son," said he, as he kissed her cheek and took his seat. "But, mother, why should uncle George have said I was to be a minister?"

"He did not, my dear."

"But of course he meant it." Here he took the card from his pocket, and read for the twentieth time: 'A benefactor to mankind, exerting great influence for great good.' "Of course he meant a miniser, and all the boys thought so, too; for, as soon as it was read, they all exclaimed, 'a minister! we always knew he would be a minister!'"

Frederick gazed musingly for a moment, and then asked, "would you wish it, mother?"

"I have often told you, Frederick, that I did not wish you to think upon this subject; and although Mr. Gray has brought it so forcibly before you, I must still beg that you will give it no thought."

"But why, mother? all the boys talk of what they are to be."

"And so may you; and the more you *think* of this the better; but remember that thinking what you are *to be* is not the selection of a profession; and this is the very mistake I wished to guard you against, that the profession is not the man, but merely the channel through which he works out his thoughts and feelings, his true nature. It is the means, not the end; and before you choose the one, you must know the other. Life, to be true, must have an aim." She paused; but as Frederick did not reply, she continued: "You leave me to-morrow for College. There are two questions I wish you to consider; they are of far more importance than all your College studies; and when you return, answer them for me: 'What is life? and for what is it given to us?' When you can answer these satisfactorily, you will then be able to make choice of the course which will best enable you to accomplish the purpose of your being. The profession dies with you, but life is immortal."

The shutting of the garden gate roused Frederick from the revery into which he had fallen. It was a poor, but respectable woman, who, telling her tale of sorrow and distress, which was of so touching a nature as to draw tears from the eyes, asked relief. She had often seen Mrs. Harvey at the windows and in her garden, and had been emboldened by the

sweet expression of her countenance to make this application. Frederick looked anxiously at his mother, waiting her reply; and it was with a flushed cheek that he heard her "regret her inability to assist her, the sum required was beyond her means;" but her moistened eyes gave token of her sympathy, and as she spoke words of comfort to the suffering woman, the kindness of her tones fell like balm upon her wounded heart—half of her heavy burden seemed removed. A happier look was upon her face, and a more hopeful and trusting spirit in her bosom; and with many thanks she expressed her gratitude for the good she had received. Even Frederick was beguiled. The feeling of mortification which he had so painfully experienced at her refusal, had given place to one of pride and affection. As the door closed, leaving them once more alone, he exclaimed, "Mother, I don't wonder that every one loves you. I wish I was half as good."

"I hope you will be much better, my son. You have far greater advantages than I ever had."

"How, mother? I thought you were so rich, and had so much pains taken with your education?"

"True, but it was the education only of the mind; my heart was a secondary care. With you it has been the first."

"But your heart was naturally good, and did not require cultivation," said Frederick.

"That is a very common, yet a very great error. The heart must always be educated and trained with even greater care than the mind; for it is the *heart* that actuates, that gives tone to our thoughts, that is the spring of our actions." Mrs. Harvey

paused; and seeing that Frederick was evidently debating some point with himself, waited until it should assume a definite shape, and then asked, "what is it that you are thinking of?"

"I was doubting if the heart did not sometimes interfere with the mind. I never knew a great man to be a very good one."

"Perhaps we should differ as to the definition of a great man; but I will understand you as you mean. Do you not think that if strength of principle had been added to the force of intellect, these great men would have been greater; and if integrity of purpose had governed their actions, that they would have done less of evil and more of good?"

"I don't know, mother; I must think about it. It will be as much as I can do this whole term," he laughingly continued, "to con over all that you have said to me in a single week."

"I wish you to see life in its depth and breadth before you enter upon it," said Mrs. Harvey; "remember that *true* life is determined by its *objects*, not by its *actions*."

"Mother, I am going to ask you a very foolish question, but do tell me if you were not *ashamed* to let that woman know you had not the means to assist her?"

"No, why should I have been? Had I refused from *unwillingness*, I should have had cause to feel shame; but poverty is a mere *accident* of life."

"When I am with you, mother, and hear you, I can look upon it as such; but when I return to College, and see how much the other boys think of

money, and how much enjoyment it affords them, I confess I cannot help wishing for it."

The cloud once more rested on Frederick's brow, and Mrs. Harvey sighed as she said, "I fear, my son, that experience is the only teacher we ever listen to upon this subject. I hope it will prove a more gentle monitor to you than it has been to me."

"Dear mother, you have already suffered a great deal, and yet you still deny yourself every indulgence on my account. You have sacrificed too much for me, and this is one reason why I am so anxious to decide upon a profession, so that I may be earning something for you as soon as possible. Yet you still tell me to wait, wait."

"The tree cannot bear fruit until it is grown."

"But, mother, you are spending all of your principal, and will leave yourself nothing."

"Let it all go; I am willing, if it leaves you in possession of that mine of wealth, a cultivated, well balanced mind, with a pure and upright character for its basis."

"But suppose I should be sick, or die."

"I should then have the pleasing consciousness of having spared no pains to perfect you, and this would be a greater consolation than the largest fortune."

"How little you care for money, mother! Do you *never* wish for it?"

"Yes, my son; it would scarcely be natural if I did not; but I never allow it to make me unhappy. I should have been very glad to have had it in my power to assist Mrs. Burns this morning, for I confess it is always a trial to me to refuse assistance

when it is really needed; but it would be very wrong in me to make myself wretched on account of it. There is a false estimate placed upon money by the world, and we must rise above it."

Frederick and his mother had been so much engaged in their conversation, that they did not notice the arrival of a sleigh; and not until Mr. Gray had tapped once or twice at the window with his whip, was he seen; and, strange to say, it was with slow and almost unwilling steps that Frederick admitted him. He had been the cause of troubled thought, and, however unintentionally, must pay the penalty. Youth turns with distaste from the realities of life, and can scarcely forgive the hand that discloses them. Mr. Gray felt that it was not the warm welcome he was accustomed to; and although Mrs. Harvey received him with her habitual manner, still something was wanting, and knowing that Frederick was to leave for College the next day, he feared that some difficulty had arisen to trouble them. So, with his usual kindness of heart, he determined to discover the cause, and relieve them if possible; for Mrs. Harvey was the widow of one of his most intimate friends, and had become the cherished object of his regard. He, therefore, turned to Frederick, saying, "It is a bitterly cold day, my boy, and I am almost frozen. Will you take my sleigh and attend to a little commission for me in Boston?"

"With pleasure," said Frederick, his good-nature partially returning at the opportunity of obliging Mr. Gray, to whom he owed so many favors.

"Well, buy me four of the warmest fur caps you

can find. My College boys will freeze off their ears to-morrow if I do not see to them."

A fur cap was just what Frederick wished; and as he knew that one would be for him, it was with a lighter heart that he started for the city.

Youth recovers itself at once; but not so with age. There had been many things in their conversation that morning which troubled Mrs. Harvey, and they still dwelt upon her heart.

"Now," said Mr. Gray, drawing his chair up to the fire and rubbing his hands, "we can have a nice little chat. That was a capital ruse to get rid of Frederick, was it not?" but his manner suddenly changed, as turning to Mrs. Harvey he saw the tears flowing from her eyes, and in a kind and affectionate tone he said, "I saw when I came in that something had gone wrong. Will you not confide in me?"

"Oh! Mr. Gray," said the mother, who with a great effort controlled her tears, "I fear for my child."

"For Frederick? what can you fear? I see not a fault in him."

"He was feeling rather unhappily when you entered, yet the pleasure of a new cap was sufficient to drive every thing from his mind."

"Not only the cap, but the pleasure of the drive, perhaps," said Mr. Gray. "You are too hard upon him; you must allow for youth."

"A mother's eye never fails, Mr. Gray. You knew his father's love of wealth, and fondness for dress and amusements. They were his bane; and I fear they will prove the same to Frederick. I early saw

that he had inherited these tastes, and it has been the chief object of my life to overrule them."

"Have you ever spoken to him about them?"

"No; I feared to give form to feelings of which he was hardly conscious; and what pained me chiefly this morning was his admission of the weakness. I hoped to have kept it out of sight, for I do not believe in directly combating faults. They can never be wholly eradicated; and it is only by cultivating most carefully the corresponding virtues that they can be overruled; and I think this can be better done by having no apparent motive."

"Would it not be well to tell him something of his father's life?" asked Mr. Gray; "might it not serve as a warning to him?"

"No, I think not; he is not ripe enough for it. I fear that it would prove an example, rather than a warning. Boys take a pride in resembling their fathers; and the inheritance of a fault they look upon as an excuse for retaining it."

"You are right," said Mr. Gray, "and Frederick is fortunate in having such a mother. I asked your confidence in the hope of assisting you; but you are your best counsellor."

"It would be strange if I were not, for a child's welfare is always nearest the mother's heart. And now, Mr. Gray," she said, smiling, "I will turn the tables, if you please, and find a little fault with you."

"With me? why what have I done?"

"You instilled into Frederick's mind the thoughts which I have been endeavoring to remove from it.'

"In what way?"

"By your lottery."

"The lottery! ah, yes. But what did you particularly object to in that?"

"To many things."

"Name them," said Mr. Gray, giving his chair a push farther back. It is not in human nature to bear reproof in kindness. Mrs. Harvey saw the action, and knew the cause; but the welfare that she had said "was ever near the mother's heart" induced her to proceed:

"You must excuse me, Mr. Gray, but you have great influence over Frederick's mind; and when I think this influence to be injurious, ought I not to say so?"

Mr. Gray had a generous spirit, and could not but admire the guardian care of Mrs. Harvey. He smiled, therefore, and said, "Yes, yes, we won't quarrel about it; but I confess I cannot see what my error has been."

"In making men of boys. You have given them topics for consideration for which they are not prepared."

The entrance of visitors put an end to the conversation, and Frederick arriving soon after, Mr. Gray took his leave.

CHAPTER FIFTH.

THE next morning was a most discouraging one. The snow fell thick and fast, with but little promise of a change.

"Frank will have a wretched day for his journey," said Mrs. Clifford, as she looked at the falling snow. "Had he not better wait until to-morrow?"

"I should think so," replied her husband; "but boys are fond of company, and riding alone would be more terrible to Frank than the worst of snow-storms?"

"Perhaps the other boys will wait, too."

"Wait! no indeed. Do you think Selden would let them lose a whole day?"

"Why? they certainly cannot learn much in one day."

"It is not the learning so much as the principle. Selden takes a pride in these things, and would think it unworthy of Harry either to flinch at a snow-storm or fail in punctuality."

"I think it all nonsense," said Mrs. Clifford; "and what a fuss they make about the first honor. I would not lift my finger for it."

"It is well that you feel so," returned her husband, laughingly, "for Frank is an easy dog, and has little chance of it."

Mr. Clifford's father had died when he was quite young, leaving him, with a small independence, to

the care of a kind and indulgent guardian, who, after sending him through College, where he acquitted himself with tolerable credit, consented to the postponement of his professional studies, in order that he might accompany a party of friends on a visit to Europe. He remained abroad longer than was intended; and when he returned, he found his companions so far advanced in their studies, and he had acquired such habits of ease and indulgence, that regular application and attendance upon lectures appeared irksome in the extreme. His guardian was, therefore, in much doubt as to what course to pursue; and was greatly relieved at the discovery of a secret engagement between his ward and Miss Lee, a young girl of eighteen, who was at that time the belle of the city, and possessed in her own right of a handsome fortune. They were soon after married, and sank into the common routine of fashionable life. Mr. Clifford read the papers, and discussed politics; while his wife attended to the duties of her toilet, and the *tout ensemble* of her establishment. Their beautiful children were treated at first as playthings, as dolls to be dressed and exhibited. And now that they were older, their only ambition appeared to be, to see them shine as the ornament of that society in which they had themselves found their chief happiness.

"What, all ready for your journey?" cried Mr. Clifford, as Frank entered the breakfast room; "your mother wishes you to wait until to-morrow."

"Oh, it will clear up soon; besides, I shall miss all the fun."

"Do you think the boys will go such a day?" asked his mother.

"Go! yes indeed; and there they are now, and I have not had a mouthful of breakfast."

"Stop," cried his mother, as he threw on his cloak, "here is a cup of hot coffee; drink it while I call the girls to say good bye."

Mr. Clifford now threw open the window and begged the young Seldens to come in; but the driver declared that he could not wait a moment, he was already behind the time. So, with a hearty kiss to his mother and sisters, Frank was obliged to run off, leaving his breakfast and coffee both untasted. Harry was looking up most wistfully at the windows, and felt well rewarded by Ellen's waving adieu and encouraging smile — a smile which cheered him through many a gloomy hour that term, when, tired and weary, he was almost tempted to abandon the prize which was now severely contested by a rival classmate.

"I almost wish," said Mrs. Clifford, as she resumed her seat, "that we had pursued our own course, and sent Frank to Cambridge. It is so much nearer than New Haven."

"So it is," replied Mr. Clifford, "but Frank would have been wretched away from the other boys."

"Why was Mr. Selden so partial to Yale? I should have said that every thing was in favor of Cambridge. To be sure I know nothing of the system of instruction, but the society cannot be better any where; besides, he could come into the city whenever he pleased."

"That is just what Selden objected to. He wishes his boys, he says, *to study;* and their associations here might have prevented it."

"They certainly will be rough enough to please him, if that is his desire. For my part, I am not at all satisfied with Frank's manners."

"Oh, that is only college life. All boys think it smart to bluster a little. He will get over it as he grows older and mingles with the world."

"How differently Mr. Selden treats his children," continued Mrs. Clifford; "he has eyes for none but Harry, making a very idol of him, while he neglects Charles and the girls most shamefully."

"Harry is his eldest, you know, and a smart fellow, too. Don't you think so, Ellen?"

"I am thinking about my work, papa. I have counted this flower all wrong," she said, breaking the silk she was embroidering with.

"Perhaps you are not thinking enough of it," said her father, laughing.

"Mrs. Harvey, I hear," continued Mrs. Clifford, pursuing the bent of her thoughts, "has sent Frederick this term to Dartmouth. That is a strange idea, is it not?"

"Yes, I should say so. It is another of her queer notions."

"Some one told me that it was less expensive, and that was the reason," said Ellen.

"I do not believe that," returned her father, "for, pressed as she is for means, she has always given him the best advantages, some, even, that I have grumbled at allowing Frank."

"Frederick told me," said Mary, "that his mother thought the climate a more invigorating one for students, and that the place being so retired, he would be less exposed to temptation."

"Pshaw," said Mrs. Clifford, "she is always preaching; who would have thought of such a thing but her?"

"Nevertheless," returned Mr. Clifford, "Frederick is a fine fellow, and does his mother infinite credit; for, with her small means, most women would have utterly failed."

Mrs. Clifford could not deny either of these facts, nor would she allow them. She, therefore, yawned as she rose from her chair, and leaving the room, effectually put an end to the conversation.

CHAPTER SIXTH.

WHEREVER an Academy, a College, or a Seminary, flourishes, the people acquire a certain tone and character peculiar to themselves, or rather to the institution which is in their midst. The students, the students' life, the students' examination, and the anniversaries, form the chief topics of interest and conversation. The graduating class becomes, in the eyes of all, an object of vast importance; and the aspirant for its honors must pass many secluded and laborious months in study and preparation. Thus had it been with Harry; but now that the winter was over and the term nearly ended, his heart beat light at the idea of meeting his father. For although there were those who whispered words of defeat, the general voice was in his favor.

One morning as he sat at his study-table, intent upon the examination of various sheets and half sheets of paper, the embryo of that valedictory address which he hoped was to draw down thunders of applause upon his head, the door opened, and his brother entered.

"Have you been to the Post-office?" he asked.

"No. I thought you would go."

"I? no, I have been playing ball. It is your turn to go; but if I had thought, I might have known you were poring over those everlasting papers."

"What is your hurry for the Post to-day?" asked Harry.

"Why I have spent all my money; and if some does not come from home, I shall be cut out of the supper to-night."

"Well, I will go in a minute," said Harry.

"Your minute always means an hour," said Charles, "so I had better be off," and suiting the action to the word, he was soon walking rapidly down the street.

Harry turned once more to his papers, and was again absorbed in their contents when his brother returned in breathless haste, with an open letter in his hand.

"Quick, Harry, quick. Put up your papers and pack up; papa is very ill, and wants to see us. The stage leaves at two o'clock, so that we have barely time to get ready."

Harry received the letter, and mechanically read it. It was from his mother, informing them of their father's illness, and urgingtheir immediate return, as there was little hope of his recovery.

Charles was busily preparing for their departure, and it was some moments before he observed that Harry had fallen senseless upon the table. He then called loudly for help, and was much relieved to see the color returning to his pale lips and livid cheeks. But nothing could rouse him from the stupor into which he had fallen. His father ill! could it be?

The journey was a long and wearisome one; for although Charles urged the drivers on both by entreaties and bribes, the stage dragged but slowly up the hills; and many precious hours elapsed before

they entered the city and approached their father's house. Their father's! even Charles shuddered with an undefined dread at the word.

The door was quickly opened, and weeping domestics pointed to his chamber. He was dying! Harry was foremost now; his mother weeping in her agony, his sisters kneeling at the bedside, were unheeded by him. That father who had been the sole idea of his mind was before him. He rushed wildly to the bedside, frantically clung to him, and begged him to speak but one word. And these beloved tones had power even at that late moment to recall the departing spirit. The eyes of the dying man were unclosed, and seeing his beloved son, with a convulsive effort he arose and clasped his arms around him. Then falling back, he expired.

With difficulty Harry was forced from the room; and for many days seemed hovering between life and death. His mind, already worn by the constant efforts to which it had been subjected, now gave way. His delirium was most touching, revealing, as it did, the habitual character of his thoughts. He would recite his lessons, rehearse his speeches, hold long conversations with his father, and then, with a sudden revulsion, become frantic at his loss. At length, however, the fever of his brain subsided, his paroxysms were less frequent and less violent, and hope was entertained of his recovery.

But his convalescence was slow; and it was very much against the opinion of his friends, that at the close of the vacation he determined to return to his collegiate studies. He felt that his father's spirit hovered near him; that he had still a duty to

perform. The honor must at all events be won. But of what little value did it appear of itself, now that the incentive and the reward were lost to him—lost forever!

Upon the last evening of the vacation he sought the library, so associated with his father's memory, and sat at the open window, gazing upon one of those gorgeous sunsets which are peculiar to the autumnal season. It is a splendor that is *felt*. The soul takes in long draughts of beauty, and the heart seems to lie down upon the bosom of Nature.

Harry had given himself up in breathless ecstacy to its fascination, with no palpable thought, no sensation but that of pleasure. It was a resting-place for his wounded heart. He had thus watched until he almost expected to see his father's spirit beckoning to him from the skies, when he was startled by a soft voice—"Good evening, Harry," it said, and Ellen Clifford stood beside him. She had not seen him since the death of his father, and the sight of her recalled him to his grief. The tears gushed in torrents from his eyes, while hers flowed in silent sympathy.

"Oh, Ellen, what a loss!" he exclaimed, as with a strong effort he controlled the sobs which had almost exhausted his weak frame.

"Yes, dear Harry; but you must not thus give way to your feelings, or you will make yourself sick again."

"And why not? what have I to live for? Life is a blank to me; would that I had died with him!"

"Oh, Harry, do not speak so," said Ellen, the tears once more filling her eyes, "have you no other friends to live for?"

"Ellen!" he exclaimed with passionate energy, "do you love me?"

He had risen from the chair, seized her hand, and clasped it in both of his, and now waited her answer with an intensity of gaze that almost terrified her. But love conquered her timidity. She knew that he must not be excited, and her voice was calm and steady as she replied:

"Yes, Harry, we all love you."

"Ellen, do not deceive me. Do *you* love me?" he repeated in a low stifled tone.

"I do," said Ellen, the color mounting to her cheeks.

"With your whole soul?"

"Yes," said Ellen, trembling at his vehemence.

"And you will love me forever? speak! You have recalled me to life. Shall it be spent for and with you?"

Ellen had fallen weeping upon his shoulder. Harry pressed her again and again to his heart; she had indeed recalled him to life. The intensity of his grief was spent. The soothing balm of love had strengthened and refreshed his drooping soul. All wondered at the change, but none knew the cause. The love of young hearts cannot brook the cold scrutiny of the world, and they hid the treasured secret in their own bosoms.

CHAPTER SEVENTH.

Mr. Selden had died without a will; for death had overtaken him in the full strength of his manhood, and he was unprepared for its approach. The blow, however, had been so sudden, and Harry's illness so severe, that it was not until after the departure of the boys for College that it was deemed necessary to call upon Mrs. Selden and remind her that it was time to examine into his affairs and wind up his accounts, so as to leave the property in a tangible shape for herself and children. But this necessarily occupied much time; for Mr. Selden had been a lawyer of eminent ability, and had always had a large practice. His business relations had also been very extensive; for the large fortune he was supposed to possess had been acquired chiefly by successful speculations. Notes were to be collected, demands to be met, bills to be called in, and accounts forwarded in various directions, before the estate could be settled. It was, therefore, nearly the end of the winter term at College before the result was determined, and then, to the surprise of all, it was discovered that this speculative fortune had dwindled into almost nothing; and now that the income acquired by his profession, that surest of all property, was withdrawn, a mere remnant remained for the support of Mr. Selden's hitherto much indulged and pampered family; so that it would only be by the most rigid economy

that Mrs. Selden could hope to preserve even the appearance of that wealth to which she had been accustomed. It was, however, determined that at all events the boys should remain at College and study their professions; for it had been the prominent wish of Mr. Selden's heart to see them treading in the public walks of life. It was, therefore, deemed unnecessary to write to them upon the subject; and not until their return home were they informed of the result.

Harry felt it a severe blow, but more on account of his father's reputation and his mother's pride than for himself. What was money to him? Had he not talents, and a wide world before him? Poor Harry! he had yet to learn that bank accounts and railroad stocks are of far more value in the eyes of the world than the brightest intellect!

How different would have been his feelings could he have overheard a conversation which took place about a fortnight before his return from College!

Mr. Clifford, who had always been a friend of the family, was one of the first to be apprised of their embarrassments, the intelligence of which greatly shocked him, not only upon their account, but upon his own; for he had always considered it a settled thing that Ellen was to be the sharer of all the many honors which, as a matter of course, were to be showered down upon the handsome and gifted Harry. But Harry, with an enterprising, fond father to introduce him into life, with all the advantages of a large fortune and its accompanying privileges, was a very different person from the same Harry, now fatherless and poor! What, marry his beautiful daughter to a

poor lawyer, with only his profession to depend upon? It were madness to think of it; and yet what could be done? He had himself encouraged Harry's attentions, and how could he now in honor retract? Such were his unenviable feelings as he walked with short and hurried steps up and down the breakfast room. The table had been removed, and the girls were at their studies, so that Mrs. Clifford, who was languidly turning over the leaves of the last new novel, was his sole companion.

"Emily," he said, stopping abruptly before her, "something must be done, and at once. The boys will be at home soon, and before we know it, Harry and Ellen will be engaged, and then it will be too late. I think I had better speak to Ellen, and tell her how utterly ridiculous it would be, and so prepare her to refuse him, as I positively will never consent to her marrying him."

"You are wrong there; direct opposition will only strengthen the attachment."

"I agree with you, when there is any other plan, any way of separating them."

"I thought of a way last night. You know how often my aunt in New York has begged that we would carry the children to see her. Suppose that we should take them now?"

"That would only be postponing matters; for in September Harry returns home to live, and they will then be certainly together."

"Something may occur by that time to prevent it," said Mrs. Clifford; "my chief object now would be to let Ellen see more of the world, and receive the attentions of other young men. You know it has been so generally looked upon as a match, that no

one but Harry has ever presumed to think of her; but it will be different in New York. She is pretty and attractive, and will probably create quite a sensation, and meet a great many others whom she will like quite as well as Harry; and if she is the girl I think her to be, she will give him up of her own accord. She is fond of show."

"That is true," said Mr. Clifford, evidently relieved; "but what shall be done with Frank in the mean time?"

"Take him, too; he has never been to New York."

"But then we shall have to wait his arrival; and as the Seldens come at the same time, it will give Harry an opportunity, which he might embrace, of speaking to her; and this would spoil the whole."

"Write to Frank, then, to meet us in the city."

Mr. Clifford mused for a moment, and then agreed that it "would do very well. You women understand the ways and means of life so much better than men. *I* should never have thought of such a plan."

The letter to Frank was written and sent; thus putting an end, for the present at least, to all those dreams of happiness which had nerved Harry to the accomplishment of his purposes. True, the honors of his class had been adjudged him; but half the pleasure was destroyed, now that he could not receive the congratulations of her for whom he had toiled. And Ellen, too; with what a chilled heart and lagging step did she prepare for the journey! But what did that matter? Parents know what is best; and Mr. Clifford had decided that he had rather inflict a little pain now, than consent to a step that would surely lead to unhappiness hereafter.

CHAPTER EIGHTH.

About this time Mrs. Harvey received a letter from her son, which freed her mind of many of the anxieties to which it had been a prey. It was long and full, as all of Frederick's letters were; for she had taught him that a correspondence which merely told of the weather, of health, and of sports, lost its chief object of attraction. It should be an interchange of thoughts and feelings; the growth of opinions and ideas; an outpouring of the soul; a relief to the over-burdened mind; or a consolation to the afflicted spirit. What can be pleasanter and more improving than a correspondence thus carried on? And such had been theirs.

He now wrote, as usual, of every thing, of his pursuits, studies, friends, and the common incidents of a College life; but the part which interested Mrs. Harvey most was the following:

"I cannot tell you, dear mother, how much benefit I have derived from the conversation you held with me some months ago concerning life. The attempt to answer your two questions, which at first appeared so easy, has presented our whole existence in a new aspect to me. It has become a reality instead of a dream. The more I reflect upon them, the more difficult they become; and even now I cannot answer them in a manner which would be satisfactory either to myself or to you.

"In two weeks I shall return, and would like to talk with you upon the subject; but this you have refused. I sometimes think that by speaking aloud and giving shape to my thoughts I could more readily define them. 'Yes,' you will say, 'by catching at my ideas;' and I don't know but that you are right. It, however, seems ridiculous that two whole terms should have passed since you proposed them to me, and I should be still without an answer for you. But the subject expands before me, and seems beyond my grasp. The other day I thought I would plagiarise a little; so I took up a prayer-book, and turned to the hymns where they call life 'a fleeting dream—a shadow that soon passeth away—a flower that liveth but a day.' And then I strolled up the hills and into the beautiful valley, and threw myself under a tree, as is my wont when perplexed with thought. I covered my face with my hands to exclude the world, and reflected upon what I had read; but I could not be satisfied. Life is not an empty dream, but a reality, stern or beautiful, according to circumstances. Neither is it a shadow, which is, in itself, the mere appearance of a thing, leaving no trace behind it. It is the very *something* which constitutes our being, and for which we are answerable. Nor is it a flower that liveth but a day, for it is but the beginning of days—of eternity itself! And so, as I have written you before, I dissent from all I read. A pilgrimage to the tomb, and definitions of that character, I look upon as impious and ungrateful, when earth is robed in so much beauty for our sole enjoyment.

"Your second question as to the *aim* of life, is a

much easier matter; for I can readily tell you what generally is. First, and almost universally, it is the acquisition of wealth, or, as it is modestly called, the "acquiring of an independence." A few, more ambitious, and a little above the common herd, aim at fame and reputation; while fewer still aspire to learning and self-improvement. And these include the whole; for although there are many who *profess* to act from motives of duty and usefulness alone, I never have been so fortunate as to meet with one of that class, whose actions quite corresponded with their professions. What shall be mine is, you know, a second query with me, dependent, too, upon the first, which I am afraid I shall never solve."

Mrs. Harvey smiled with pleasure as she folded the letter and placed it in a work-basket at her side.

"He has discovered what life is *not*," she thought, "and that is one step gained, and a most important one. He is dipping, too, a little into character, which, when free from personalities, is a fine study." She was making a garment for a poor girl, and her fingers flew rapidly, for her heart was light. Had not Frederick spoken slightingly of wealth? the desire for which she had considered his greatest fault. "Can any one," she argued, "who seriously reflects upon life, waste his time and talents for such a paltry return? No, it cannot be."

She now counted the days for his return; and each rising and setting of the sun she welcomed as bringing him nearer to her. And at last he came! Her arms were once more folded around him, and they were happy.

The following morning, after a long hour spent

at the breakfast table (his mother indulged him in vacations), Frederick arose, saying, "The boys have got back, I suppose?"

"I do not know; but they were expected."

"Well, I will go and see them, and the Cliffords, too."

"The Cliffords are in New York."

"In New York!" he exclaimed in surprise, holding his hat suspended over his head.

"Yes; they went the day before yesterday."

Frederick placed his hat upon the table and resumed his seat.

"Have you given up your visit?" asked his mother.

"No; but there is plenty of time. What made them go?"

"Who?"

"The Cliffords. They have never been before."

"That is the reason. Mr. Clifford wishes his daughters to see a little more of the world, I believe; and more particularly still, an old aunt of their mother's."

Frederick leaned his cheek upon his hand, and gazed wistfully at the fire.

"I am sorry," he at length said.

"Yes," returned his mother, "I thought it would be a disappointment. But the Seldens will be company for you."

"It is not the seeing them myself so much as their going. It places a wider distance between us, and thus it will be through life. They will acquire tastes, habits, and experiences which I shall be a stranger to."

"And why should that affect you? Would you wish them deprived of pleasure merely because you cannot partake of it?"

"No, not that."

"What then?"

"You question me closely, mother."

"And you will answer me, will you not?"

"Yes, but I would rather not. It was a foolish feeling, and is past already." He paused, but as his mother appeared to wait his continuance, he resumed. "I thought it might make them proud, and think themselves superior to me, which they are not," he added, throwing back his head, as if the very thought had roused his pride.

"Certainly they are not, and it was foolish in you to think it."

"The canker *will* eat its way," sighed his mother, as Frederick left her for his walk. "This morbid sensitiveness on account of his poverty still clings to him. But time and culture will one day cure it."

CHAPTER NINTH.

ELLEN'S visit to New York was certainly a delightful one, notwithstanding her regrets at leaving Boston at that particular time; for the young heart is light and elastic, and turns to pleasure as to its natural magnet. Yet Mr. Clifford had little to congratulate himself upon beyond the mere temporary enjoyment it had afforded to them all. For although Ellen had been, as he had expected, an object of much admiration and attention, the effect produced by it had been just the reverse of what he desired; for meeting with no one that even in *his* estimation was at all equal to Harry Selden, the comparisons which she naturally drew, all resulted in his favor. It was, therefore, rather a provoking circumstance to him that Frank was awarded the third honor of his class, as it compelled him to attend the commencement of the College with his family. Not that he was himself so much interested in the performances, as that Frank would have felt slighted at their absence, and others might have wondered at the cause. Thus was he induced to take Ellen to the very place which of all others he would have avoided, and at the very time that was most unfavorable to his plans.

It was a starlit night of peerless beauty; and Ellen felt, as she strolled with Harry beneath those graceful elms, the ornaments of New Haven, that it was

indeed a fairy scene. She had arrived late in the afternoon; and her mother being too much fatigued to accompany Mary and herself, they had not been able to accept any of the many invitations that had been provided them by Frank. Mr. Clifford had regretted this, as he had wished to avail himself of every opportunity of introducing Ellen to the *beau monde;* his chief object being so to dazzle her by the fascinations of society, that she might acquire the same wise appreciation of wealth which he himself possessed.

He had left the crowded parlor of the Hotel only for a moment, when Harry proposed to Ellen to accompany him upon his farewell stroll through the city; and as they had been brought up upon such intimate terms, she had not deemed it necessary to consult her mother, who was busily engaged in conversation with an old friend, and had thus escaped the refusal she would certainly have received. They had not met since that memorable evening in October, nearly one year before; and it was, therefore, with much agitation that Ellen took his arm, and went forth with him alone into the night.

But the calm stillness of the scene hushed the wild beating of their hearts; and as they walked on in silence, a conscious happiness possessed them. The first glance had proved that both were true.

"Ellen, it was for such an hour as this that I have toiled. Ought I not to be happy?" asked Harry.

A beaming look of affection was his answer; and now he told her of his daily self-denials, of his sleepless nights spent in laborious study, and all to be worthy of her love! He spoke of the future. He

was "poor now, but what did that matter? He would work the harder, and earn the riches he thought to have inherited." And Ellen felt that it would be far pleasanter to enjoy a *little* earned by such labors, than to have all the wealth of Peru bestowed by another. Those true hearts were young and foolish! The wisdom of age was wanting.

Mr. Clifford, who had been impatiently awaiting their return, was much relieved upon their entrance to see them so calm and self-possessed. For although there was a softened and subdued expression upon Ellen's countenance, which betokened a pure and quiet happiness, still there was no trace of the agitation and flurry of manner which always accompanies the first declaration of love. And so great was his relief, that the cold reserve he had maintained towards Harry was at once withdrawn. For if he could neglect so good an opportunity, at a time of such unusual excitement, to express his feelings, of course he could have no present wish of a formal engagement. They were, therefore, allowed many liberties which, had it not been for Mr. Clifford's delusion, would certainly have been denied.

The following day was the anniversary of the College, and Harry delivered his valedictory address, amid the applause of all. Yet he heeded nothing, cared for nothing, but the encouraging looks, which from time to time he read upon that speaking face, which was to him the only object in the crowd.

Frank also, to the surprise of all who knew his easy, amiable disposition, acquitted himself well and handsomely; so that, upon the whole, Mr. Clifford

felt satisfied with his visit; and, congratulating him self that no evil had been done, returned home, al most laughing at the fears which had before so much distressed him.

Time rolled on, and Ellen became the universal favourite — the reigning belle. Sprightly and beautiful, yet calm and sensible, she had won the love of many. Still, she was fond of admiration, and enjoyed her conquests; by which, too, Harry himself felt flattered, for he never doubted her truth, and thus shared her triumphs. He therefore smiled at the growing attentions of Edwin Sandford, his late rival at college; who, while pursuing his professional studies at Cambridge, had many opportunities of meeting Ellen, and appeared destined once more to be his competitor.

Mr. Clifford also smiled. Was there not reason? Edwin was wealthy, handsome, talented; and while Harry remained quiet, as though secure of his prize, he was eager and earnest in the pursuit. Girls like attention, and the *expression* of love, as well, if not more, than even the feeling itself; and therefore Mr. Clifford hoped that, while Ellen's youthful affection for Harry would be extinguished by the want of nourishment, that for Edwin, fed by a lamp of burning incense, would insensibly grow into life and strength — time would indeed work the cure. His manner to Harry became even more kind than ever. Poor fellow! he pitied him.

CHAPTER TENTH.

In the meantime, Harry had entered the office of one of his father's friends, and was making rapid progress in his studies. The future was bright before him, and life a splendid dream.

"Ellen," said he, as they strolled in the moonlit garden at Mr. Gray's, "is not this a beautiful world? How can man ever call life a curse, when there are such exhibitions of beauty above and around them?"

"They do not see the beauty," said Ellen, the tone of her voice, as that of her feelings, becoming deeper and more true, when conversing with Harry, than it was with others. It was this opportunity of giving vent to her higher and purer thoughts, that made their stolen interviews so dear to her heart. She felt herself a nobler being when alone with him. The veil over her better self, which she wore to the world, could then be laid aside; for Harry had a winning way of turning the thoughts from trifling and vain topics, to those of a loftier strain. This is a secret of love too often neglected. Wit and raillery, however innocent and amusing, live but an hour. Lasting emotions are only produced by the utterance of true and elevated feelings. This was the influence that Harry exerted over her; and often, when surrounded by company, amid the profusion of bows and compliments, she would recall the last words of Harry, and pine for a renewal of the theme.

"It is their own fault," said Harry, continuing the conversation; "and they should blame themselves, and not the world, or its Maker."

"It is strange," said Ellen, "how few persons speak of these beauties as you do; and I fear I should have been quite as blind to them myself, if you had not opened my eyes." She smiled as she looked up to him, and his thoughts came back to earth.

"Ellen, do you know I begin to think we have kept our love too long a secret? We should have confided it to your father."

"Why?" asked the blushing girl.

"I may be wrong, for love is jealous; but I have fancied of late, that he was encouraging the attentions of Edwin Sandford."

"While I have thought him more than usually attentive to you."

"True; but in a way that has annoyed me, I don't exactly know why."

Ellen looked up inquiringly, but did not speak; and Harry resumed.

"I had always supposed——"

"What?" asked Ellen, as he hesitated.

"That he wished our engagement. But I have now an undefined dread of evil." He paused, and they walked on for some moments in silence, both absorbed in their own reflections; Ellen trying to discover something that would solve the mystery, and Harry doubting if he should press the matter. At length he turned to her.

"Ellen, may I speak to your father?"

"If you think best; but I should be very sorry,

for I like to feel, even when in company, that it is a secret between ourselves."

"So do I," said Harry. "But we must not risk too much."

Steps were now heard approaching them. "Quick," said Harry, "shall I speak to him?"

"Not yet, wait until I see you again."

They were now joined by others of the party, among whom was Edwin Sandford.

"Where have you been?" he asked. "We have been seeking you everywhere."

"The evening was so tempting," said Ellen, "that we strolled off into one of our childhood's walks."

Edwin had taken his usual place at her side, but her manner was somewhat cold and distant; and for the first time, he felt a pang of jealousy. She had been his companion upon the ride out; and he now regretted that he had lost so fine an opportunity of expressing the feelings that filled his bosom. But he consoled himself by thoughts of their return. The night was one of surpassing beauty, and the softening influence of the moon was favourable to love, and he would certainly take advantage of it. What, then, was his surprise, to hear her accept a seat with the Chaunceys!

"You have forgotten your engagement with me, Miss Clifford."

"It terminated with the ride out, I supposed."

"Indeed! That was not my understanding of it. But of course, whatever pleases you is right," he said, bowing haughtily.

"Thank you. I will ride with the Chaunceys."

Edwin drew himself up to his full height, and the

temper flashed from his dark eye, as, turning to a young lady beside him, he entered into conversation with her. But resentment soon gave place to disappointment; and, vexed and irritated, he returned to the garden to recover himself. "She should not know the wound she had inflicted!" He now recalled the various attentions of Mr. Clifford, and felt himself duped by them; and although he could not but acknowledge that Ellen's manner to him had been the same as to others, still she must have known his passion, and should have chilled it. But gradually his anger was softened; the mild rays of the moon calmed his heated spirit. "He might have been hasty — perhaps, after all, she had not *meant* as much as he had supposed. Something, too, may have angered her." Once more he recalled every incident of their acquaintance. "Mr. Clifford's manner, certainly, had been undoubted in its character." Thus he first teased himself with fears, then doubted, until he almost hoped. "At least," he now thought, "I will be certain. She knows I love her, and saying so cannot hurt me. These torturing doubts are terrible!" And with long and hasty strides, he re-entered the house.

Ellen had seen and read the feelings with which he had left her; and although she was relieved to think she had so easily put an end to attentions which might possibly have proved troublesome, yet she felt the justice of his reproach, and was willing to make amends, and in some degree soften the blow she had inflicted. She supposed his pride was too much wounded to allow of a return, and her fears left her; so that, when he once more advanced towards her, it

was with a smile, although an embarrassed one, that she received him. Harry, who was standing near, observed her manner, and attributing it to his remarks, was well pleased that they had so impressed her; while hope once more kindled in Edwin's bosom.

"Miss Clifford," he said, in a low, eager tone, "will you ride with me?"

It was unexpected to Ellen, and the color mounted to her cheeks. "The Chaunceys," she said, "have made their arrangements, and it will hardly do to disappoint them."

"You have not hesitated to disappoint me."

"I will make up for it some other time."

"That will be difficult, for I have much that I would say to you to-night. Stop!" he cried, as she turned to leave him. "Let me hear my doom at once. Am I to understand that you reject my suit?"

Ellen now saw that there was no escape. She had hoped to have been spared the pain of her father's displeasure, by allowing him no opportunity of addressing her, and at the same time slighting his attentions. But in this she was disappointed; and she now turned to him with a frank sweetness of manner, acknowledging that such had been her intention, and regretting that she had not sooner given evidence of her feelings, and so spared him the pain of a refusal.

Edwin was charmed as he listened, and soothed by her self-reproaches.

"Was there no hope?"

"None."

Time, then, must be his comforter.

CHAPTER ELEVENTH.

Two days after the party at Mr. Gray's, as Ellen was seated in the parlour, busily engaged with her embroidery frame, a note was handed to her father. His face grew pale as he read the contents; and, starting up, he called her to accompany him. Leading the way to his library, he handed her the note, and demanded what it meant. His manner was stern — never before had he so spoken to her; and she trembled with agitation, which, however, was greatly increased as, on reading the note, she became aware of the full extent of her misfortune.

It was from Edwin Sandford, declining an invitation to dinner, which had been sent him by her father.

"Miss Clifford," he wrote, "had, with a delicacy for which he thanked her, evidently concealed from him all that had passed between them. He, however, was not ashamed to confess the love he had felt for her, but must be allowed to plead it as an excuse for absenting himself awhile from her society."

Ellen recollected the fears of Harry, and feeling sure of the turn the conversation would take, stood before her father as a culprit.

"What does it mean?" he asked.

Ellen was silent. Dread had seized upon her heart —she saw that her fears were just.

"Is he not worthy of you? Has he not position, talents, wealth, everything?"

"But my love," said Ellen, somewhat piqued by his manner.

"Your love! And to whom, pray, will you give it?"

The time had come — the dreaded subject was broached. Ellen's eyes fell beneath his searching glance, and she was silent.

"Ellen, answer me. Do you love another?"

"I do," said Ellen, who was now nerved for the conflict.

Mr. Clifford clenched his teeth in anger. He understood the decided tone of feeling which prompted the avowal, and saw that there was little hope but in force. It was his turn to be silent; and as Ellen lifted her eyes to his, and read the settled purpose of his mind, she felt that it was undeserved. Reproaches she would have submitted to; but to be forced? No! And Harry, was not he as worthy as Edwin?

Love gave her courage, and she boldly answered, "I have loved Harry Selden from a child, papa, and you have known it."

Mr. Clifford could not but feel the justice of her remark, but was not generous enough to acknowledge it.

"And you are not ashamed to confess it? It were better to wait, I should think, until he asked it."

There was a sneer upon his lip; and as the color mounted to Ellen's cheek, Mr. Clifford thought he had triumphed. But a glance at her flashing eye, the proud toss of her head, and fixed compression of her mouth, convinced him of his error. He had mistaken resentment for shame—injured delicacy for mortified vanity; and as she turned to leave him, as

not deigning a reply, he called to her, "Ellen, you forget yourself. Come back and answer me. Have you engaged yourself to Harry?"

His subdued tone arrested her. She felt that he was her father, that he had a right to question her, and that he had cause, too, to be angry; for, although they had *meant* no wrong, they had nevertheless committed it.

"We supposed you would sanction it. We grew up with the expectation, and never doubted your approval."

"How long have you been engaged?"

"Since his father's death." Her voice trembled, and tears started to her eyes as she recalled the scene.

"Leave me," said Mr. Clifford, throwing himself into a chair, and covering his face with his hands. It was a blow to his most cherished hopes, for he felt that it was *too late*.

"Papa," said Ellen, approaching him.

"Begone!" he cried, starting from his chair, and stamping his feet.

Tears burst from her eyes as she closed the door, and, flying to her chamber, threw herself, sobbing, upon the bed.

CHAPTER TWELFTH.

Mr. Chauncey had formerly been an intimate friend of Mr. Selden's; and, in the commencement of his own career, as a young and inexperienced lawyer, had been indebted to him for many kindnesses. He was therefore particularly anxious to assist his son, who was now in need of the same encouragement and advice, which his own experience had taught him, were of such material aid upon the threshold of life. Men are too apt to forget, when absorbed in their own established pursuits, how much the young prize an encouraging word, and a friendly glance. It gives them strength to push onward in their laborious path, lighting it up with hope and joy!

But Mr. Chauncey was one of the few who appreciated their difficulties and necessities; and was ready to promote the interests, and cheer the hearts, of all who approached him. He did not, therefore, flatter himself "that he had done all that could be expected" by taking Harry into his office, and assisting him in his studies; but was bent, now that he had nearly completed his preparatory course, upon seeing him at once established in an advantageous manner. But here was the difficulty. What was meant by this "advantageous manner?" "Why, of course, the being a partner of some prominent country lawyer, in a flourishing country town; where, being soon

known and appreciated, he would quickly acquire that eminence and reputation which his talents justly demanded for him, but which, in a city, it would require years to attain." So thought Mr. Chauncey. But Harry was, as we have said, *ambitious!* Not of success, of making a fortune, of being a good lawyer, or a good statesman; but he must be a *great* man! *the* great man! the *greatest* of men! And how could this be in the country? No! the city should be his sphere of action! Why should he not succeed? Had he not a name? position? talents?

The young are always sanguine. Well for them that it is so! But Mr. Chauncey knew, better than he, what he would encounter; what an arduous undertaking it would be to struggle against the many old and able competitors that were always to be found in a thronged and hungry city. 'Tis true, that after reputation has been won, honours and wealth pour in upon you. But until that auspicious moment arrives, which, alas! too often depends more upon chance than upon desert, you may toil and work—your midnight oil may burn—your frame be bent with study—your mind be stored with thought—your intellect be keen and brilliant—but you must wait! wait! wait! until hope sickens, and dies. "But," say many, "when it *does* arrive——" yes, *when* and *if* it ever does! Alas! how many talents lie buried in a city!

Mr. Chauncey and Harry were one morning debating the question with unusual warmth, when a gentleman entered the office, who was affectionately welcomed by Mr. Chauncey, and to whom Harry was introduced as the son of an old classmate and friend.

Mr. Johnson seemed much struck by his address and appearance; and, making some inquiries concerning his profession, prospects, etc., the conversation naturally turned back to the old topic, and Mr. Chauncey claimed his assistance in the argument.

Mr. Johnson had just returned from a visit to Ohio, and now spoke in glowing terms of its prosperity, and of the mighty West of which it was the threshold. He related many instances that had come to his knowledge, of the wonderful success of young men in all professions, and particularly of young lawyers, for it was a new and growing country. Lands were to be sold — deeds to be made out — titles to be adjusted. Towns were springing up—improvements of various kinds were projected, or being made. These required contracts to be drawn—required laborers—which laborers were emigrants, ignorant of the laws of the country; a brutal and quarrelsome population, whose only resource was the law. In a word, there was more business there; it must necessarily be so in a new community. But at the East, all these matters were settled. Men were educated, and knew the law almost as well as the lawyers themselves; therefore, when difficulties did arise, they were of greater importance, and required greater care in the selection of counsel; so that the old, being presumed to have a greater amount of knowledge and experience, of course obtained the greater portion of the business, even where their talents were allowed to be of an inferior order.

These were some of the arguments used to induce Harry to agree to a proposition that was now made to him. A friend of Mr. Johnson's, settled in the interior of Ohio, had consulted him as to the choice of a

junior partner, and begged his assistance in procuring one. This situation he now offered to his young friend. A bright picture had been held before him, and Harry was almost tempted to accept it. But a thought of Ellen deterred him. Leave her? No, he could not. His friends, who could not see the chain that bound him, wondered at his infatuation, and regretted his refusal.

Mr. Johnson was just from Washington; and having some political matters of consequence to discuss with Mr. Chauncey, Harry, after promising to call and see him, adjourned to the outer office.

He had scarcely seated himself, when a letter was handed to him. It was from Mr. Clifford, and as follows:

"SIR:—I was very much astonished this morning, to discover the engagement existing between my daughter and yourself. You must have known how objectionable it would be to me, or you would certainly not have concealed it so long a time yourself, or have induced her to do so. Such conduct proves you to be deficient in that honor and delicacy which I should certainly expect in the husband of my child.

I have treated you with uniform kindness, as the son of my friend; little did I think you were thus employing it against me. What do you offer my daughter? A life of poverty and trial! True, you have position, and may have talents; but it must be a long and tedious struggle, before you can acquire that wealth which would be necessary to her happiness. If you love her, as you will say you do, leave her to a better destiny. Do not ask her to share

privations which she is not fitted to bear, or tempt her to break the commands which I have imposed upon her, for never will I consent to your union. Ellen shall never be yours.

"FRANK CLIFFORD."

The bright dream vanished, and Harry remained motionless in his seat. An hour since, and the letter would have angered him. But now, it seemed but the echo of the voices he had been listening to. It would indeed be "a long and tedious struggle," before he could offer Ellen the wealth "necessary," as her father had said, "for her happiness." He had hitherto thought merely of himself—of their love—and of what could in time be done. He now saw the exigencies and the necessities of life, and how little prepared he was to meet them; and for the first time, he felt and acknowledged the value of money. At present, he had nothing. The few thousands left him by his father, would scarcely suffice for their support; he could not think of such a life. What! his wife need comforts that he could not bestow! Much as he loved her, he would not ask it. But in time—aye, *in time*—he could accomplish much. But would she wait? He believed she would. And her father—why should he object? He would at least ask it.

He seized his pen, and rapidly wrote, as hope once more sprang up in his heart. He confessed the error they had committed, in not confiding in him from the first. But they had never doubted his approval. Had he not always encouraged his attentions? They may have acted foolishly, but it was from thought

lessness alone. "You ask what I have to offer your daughter," he wrote. "I answer, everything but money, and that I shall obtain. I do not ask her to share poverty with me now. But to wait, wait until I have secured the fortune that I feel is within my reach."

The letter was finished, and sent; and at that moment the gentlemen entered from the inner room. They were surprised to see the flushed cheeks, and excited looks, of their young friend; but still more so, when he stepped up to Mr. Johnson. "You will think me changeable," he said; "but something has occurred since my conversation with you, that has almost changed my mind. I think I might be glad to accept your offer. Can you allow me time for reflection?"

"I leave, to-morrow," returned Mr. Johnson; "but at any time before my departure, I will receive your answer. I hope, for your sake, it may be a favorable one."

"He is too impulsive," thought Mr. Johnson, as he walked away; "but life will sober him." Yes, and it had begun the work!

Harry returned to his mother's house, closed his chamber-door, and communed with himself—with his heart—his hopes—his ambition: and his resolve was taken. They would all be gratified and advanced by his acceptance of Mr. Johnson's offer. But he must see Ellen; explain his views, unfold his plans, and quiet the beating of his heart. All seemed bright again, except the parting. Yet this was only for a little while. Was it not worth the pain? He would win at once the honors and the fortune (he added

fortune now) which he had hitherto only looked upon as in the distance. Eagerly he wrote:

"DEAR ELLEN:—I must see you, for I have much of importance to say to you. Will you not ride with me this evening? It may be the last time for months! Yours ever,

"HARRY."

This note he as quickly inclosed in another to her father, saying, "that he had had a situation of importance offered him at the West; and, being desirous of accepting it, wished to see Ellen alone, and hear her opinion upon the subject."

So many thoughts had crowded upon his mind, that Harry had forgotten the tone of Mr. Clifford's letter, and wrote as if he had already received his consent to their union. And now, bright visions of the future danced before him. The arguments he had combated only a few hours before, appeared now as certain truths. How could he have been so blind? But now his messenger returned, with a note from Mr. Clifford.

"SIR:—You have already received my decision. Promises are but idle words, and do not move me. My daughter's happiness is dear to me. I therefore forbid her seeing you, and request that you seek no further communication with her.

"FRANK CLIFFORD."

Harry's note to Ellen was also returned, unopened. What! was he to leave without seeing her? hearing from her? It was impossible! He knew her faith-

fulness, for he knew her character; yet he would gladly hear her promise it. Mr. Clifford had, indeed, forbidden their intercourse. But had he the right, at this late hour, to separate hearts that he himself had brought together? He would make one more effort. Again he wrote to Ellen, relating all that had occurred — his hopes — his fears — his anxiety to see her — his belief in her constancy — and his own fidelity.

But not to Mr. Clifford's kind keeping was this letter intrusted. Harry had a book of Ellen's, that he had borrowed; this he carefully wrapped in paper, for the note was within its leaves, and giving it to his sister Emma, who loved her brother, and would do anything to please him, begged that she would call upon Ellen, and give it to her. But "the young ladies were engaged that evening, and could not see her." Harry had not thought of this, but Mr. Clifford had. Still, he had not thought of the book; and so John took it as directed, to Miss Ellen, and Miss Ellen read it, kissed it, and wept over it — a wonderfully interesting book!

Thus was she employed while Harry went sadly to make his call upon Mr. Johnson, and accept the kind offer he had made him. Once more that gentleman wondered over Harry's character. It was so uneven, so unsettled, that he "feared he had been too hasty in his offer;" but it was too late to retract, and the direction of Mr. Holmes was given him, together with a letter, stating the object of his journey.

"When shall I be obliged to start?" asked Harry.

"As soon as possible," returned Mr. Johnson; "for it is already some time since I left, and Mr. Holmes

may have obtained a partner. However," he added, as he saw Harry's troubled look, "I do not think that probable. Still, any further delay may be hazardous."

"One day," replied Harry, "I will certainly need to make the necessary preparations. But I can leave upon the next."

And so it was determined. Harry then repeated his thanks, and they parted.

The next morning was a busy and a trying one, for Mrs. Selden was a selfish and indolent woman, who, having always lived in ease and wealth, still found these necessary to her happiness; and had therefore unhesitatingly accepted from Harry, with a trifling reserve for himself, the little income that had been left him, to assist in defraying the expenses of her establishment. But now that he was to leave home, to become a stranger in a strange land, he of course would need a larger supply; for his travelling expenses, his clothing, and a thousand little nothings that a move makes necessary, were to be provided for. What, then, was his surprise, when his mother burst into tears. "She was so shamefully treated! Was it not enough that her husband had left her almost a beggar? Must her sons, too, turn against her, and take the little she had?" Harry's heart was heavy. Money seemed the fruitful cause of trouble! He was fast learning the lesson. He therefore drew a much smaller sum than he had intended; and as he would now be receiving something from his profession, gave up his entire income to his mother, during the remainder of his life. It was but a paltry sum!

Many attempts Harry now made to see Ellen, to hear of her; but in vain. Every avenue was closed; and the hour at length came for him to leave, to turn his back upon the friends he had cherished, upon the scenes he had loved, and upon the memories, even, of the past. Life was to begin anew. One hand was upon the last link of the old chain, while the other grasped the new. Lingeringly he would have stood to think — to feel — but time is a relentless tyrant; we must onward! ever onward! And Harry has dropped the chain, and gone: a new era has opened before him!

CHAPTER THIRTEENTH.

Dartmouth College, of which Frederick was a member, celebrated its anniversary in 18— with unusual pride; for the graduating class was a fine one, both in number and ability.

The strong native talent of the granite hills and the Green Mountains, had there been brought together; and where can stronger minds and keener intellects be found? From among their secluded valleys have gone forth, into almost every department of life, earnest and active men. The very ruggedness of their soil, and the bleakness of their climate, seems to give corresponding force and tenacity to their characters.

It was among minds such as these that Frederick

Harvey, the widow's son, without effort, and without vanity, had won the highest honor. He was pleased —who would not have been? — but he was neither excited nor elated; and the thought uppermost in his mind, as he travelled homeward, had been of the questions given him by his mother. Could he yet solve them? Apparently not; for one whole year elapsed after that time, and he had not yet decided upon his profession.

His mother was in no haste. *Life* was her concern, not *years*. Nor was an answer in words sufficient; it must be an answer from the heart, and she waited for it.

In reflecting upon the subject, Frederick had been led into various speculations. Many things in the world, that had formerly possessed importance in his eyes, had now dwindled into insignificance. He was seeing life in its breadth and depth.

"Mother," he said one evening, as they strolled among the neighboring heights, "life here is the threshold only, of the true and eternal life."

"And its aim, my son?"

"To prepare for that life!"

Tears started to the widow's eyes, as she raised them in thankfulness to the God of truth and light. Her prayers were answered, and her son was safe. Who, with such a view of life, could waste its energies, and abuse its opportunities? He was safe!

But these questions gave rise to many others, for there are three divisions of life; the physical, the intellectual, and the moral; all of which have their necessities, and must be fed and carefully tended, or the blight of decay will rest upon them. To live

well and truly is a work, a mighty work, the great secret of which is to preserve the proper balance of the parts. Human nature is too apt to acquire the ascendency, and physical enjoyment too often becomes the end and aim of man. Thus it was with Frank Clifford. But Harry Selden had taken a step beyond. His ambition was of the intellect; his aim, the acquisition of the honors and rewards of the world. And how was it with Frederick? That earnest mother's teachings had led him still further on. Why not *use* the body, *use* the mind, in obedience to the dictates of the purer element, the moral and spiritual life?

Therefore, Frederick must be a minister. In what other sphere could all these ends be answered? It was a profession, providing for the physical necessities of our nature, as all others do. It was intellectual, requiring a constant exertion of all the powers of the mind, and giving scope also to ambition's play; for here, too, are degrees and promotions—the country and the city pastorship, the doctorate, and the bishopric, loom largely in the distance. Yes, ambition even in the ministry! But lastly, and of more importance still to Frederick, was the influence such a pursuit would exert upon himself, and at the same time enable him to exercise over others. Yes, the path was clear before him, and he had only to walk boldly on! Youth is sanguine; the path they choose is always flowery, and each prides himself upon his choice. Let us go onward with our friends, and learn a lesson from their experience.

CHAPTER FOURTEENTH.

THE bell had already rung, and the cars were about to start, as Frank Clifford rushed to the window at which Harry was sitting, and throwing him a package, exclaimed, "I have just got back. Papa has forbidden Ellen to write, but she sends you that."

The cars are gone! and now we are alone with Frank. What has he been doing this long time? We left him taking the third honor of his class. He must have talent, then. Is he developing it? cultivating it? or hiding it under a bushel? Alas! poor Frank! your parents are rich, courted, and you are handsome. What need you more? And here he might indeed have ended, had it not been that a profession was the fashion of the times, in accordance with which, he must needs select one. Consequently, his boy's ambition promised to be gratified. He was studying at the medical college; and one day or other, the M. D. would give dignity to his name.

He now stood gazing intently into the distance. His heart was with his friend; how well it was that he had made such haste! "And now," he said, "I must go back to Ellen, and tell her I have given it. It is too bad in papa!" and he walked rapidly back. But long before he reached the house, a soft hand was laid upon his arm, and Ellen's tearful eyes were searching in his own. Her lips refused their utterance.

"I was just in time," he said. "Poor Harry, he looked so sad when I first saw him; but his face lighted up the moment that he recognized me."

Ellen looked wistfully still through her falling tears, for she waited for some word, some token of remembrance. But Frank had forgotten, he had not told her how short had been their interview, and went on asking question after question concerning all that had taken place; for he had been absent some days, and had just returned, when Ellen met him at the door; and, knowing the hour that the cars would start, had rapidly told her story, and sent him with her package, before any one had known of his arrival. But not until several questions had been asked and answered, did he understand the beseeching look of that sweet face.

"Forgive me," he said. "I had forgotten I had not told you all. Harry had no time to speak, but his face expressed the feelings of his heart. You need not fear; Harry is a noble fellow, and loves you truly."

Ellen's tears were flowing fast. "If I could only have spoken to him—written to him," she said, sobbing aloud.

"I will do your writing," said Frank, kindly; adding, as they now entered the house, "run up stairs and bathe your eyes, or papa will be angry."

And so she did, and never after was she known to weep; for Ellen was a proud girl, and would not let her grief be seen. But who knows the secret of her pillow, the silent witness of her deep distress?

Mr. Clifford had gained his point, most unexpectedly to himself; for he had feared Harry's impetuous

spirit, and Ellen's determined will. But they were separated; the fates had been propitious to him! Had they? He knew not of that long letter, which was Ellen's hourly companion; or of that mysterious packet, with which she had comforted and encouraged the wanderer upon his way!

"Susan," said Frank that evening, as he sat at the little work-table where she was busily sewing, "how glad I am that we both have money."

The work dropped from her hand as she looked up, wondering at his meaning.

Frank laughed. "I am no great philosopher," he said; "but I know that money is the chief thing after all, and if we hadn't it, we might whistle for our happiness."

"Why?" asked the astonished girl; "what do you mean?"

"That papa wouldn't let us be married, that's all."

"Oh, Frank! You are not in earnest?"

"Indeed I am. He won't let Ellen marry Harry, and for no other reason in the world."

And now the affair, which Mr. Clifford had commanded to be kept *such* a secret, was revealed in minute detail to still another. No wonder, therefore, that Edwin Sanford heard it, and did not again propose for Ellen's hand; though Mr. Clifford, it must be acknowledged, played his card to admiration. Some knowing folks, however, who saw the young people once together in close conversation, stoutly maintain that Ellen made a confidant of him, and threw herself upon his honour; for he was never known to speak of Harry, who had thus a second

time triumphed at his expense. But he smiled bitterly when his name was mentioned.

It will be seen, from the above conversation between Frank and Susan Gray, that the world and friends had smiled upon their love; and it was well, for neither could have struggled long. Thus far, life had been a day-dream. No clouds had darkened, or night obscured, their visions; and plants of the sunshine wither in the shade. It is not in the glare of day that the chief of nature's beauties are exhibited. There is a grandeur in the storm, a sublimity in the rolling thunder and the lightning's flash, which strengthens while it subdues the mind, preparing it to welcome with tenfold pleasure the bright bow of promise, and dwell upon its varied tints.

And so with life. In the furnace of affliction we are tried and purified. The finest traits of character are developed, kept alive, and fostered, by the wreck of worldly prosperity. The soul that has never suffered, has hardly known enjoyment. Who would exchange the fluttering heart and throbbing pulse, those accompaniments of hope and fear, for the calm, quiet, dull sense of certainty?

But a new blow awaited Ellen. Mr. Clifford, although pleased at Frank's engagement, was yet annoyed at the many evenings that were *wasted*, as he expressed it, at the side of Susan. Frank must be a man of the world, and must, therefore, mingle with it. But what was the society of Boston to Frank? He had grown up in its midst; the young men had been his boyhood's playmates, and the girls his boyhood's sweethearts. Every door had been open to him, and every house was as his own. It

was evident to Mr. Clifford's mind, that he must leave home, and mingle with strangers, before he could be *au fait* in the varied usages and experiences of society, and therefore he determined that he should spend the ensuing winter at Philadelphia, where he could at the same time pursue his professional studies. To be sure, this was of little consequence in comparison to the advantages he would derive from mingling in a new society. Not that this was by any means superior to that of Boston; far from it. But it was different, *very* different. It would hardly be fair to say *in what.* But they worshipped different idols, and it would be a good school for Frank, who, in the succeeding year, should receive the finishing touch, the last polish of *le beau monde*, in *la belle Paris.* Fortune smiles upon you, Frank!

The day of his departure soon arrived; and Ellen felt, when the final words of her letter to Harry were penned, as if her very heart would break. The last connecting link which had bound them together was thus broken; for who now would write to him for her? Poor girl! how much more sorely would she have wept, could she but have known the fate of that same letter, which had been so carefully written, to inform Harry of all the late events, and warn him to write no more to Boston. Her father passing through the hall, where Frank had carelessly left his hat, had not only read the direction, but, with a parent's privilege, the contents of the letter; and had then committed it to the fire, rather than to the mail. While Frank, whose mind was busy with his own

preparations, entirely forgot it until some days afterwards; when he naturally supposed, as it was nowhere to be found, that he had sent it upon its journey.

CHAPTER FIFTEENTH.

It was with a solemn step, and elevated tone of feeling, that Frederick Harvey ascended the chapel stairs of the seminary which he had joined. He was to take his place for the first time among those choice ones, set apart for the ministry of good! It was the sabbath, a hallowed day; and an awe spread over him, as he beheld the rows of students all devoted to the cause of truth, and listened as the anthem swelled, not from the mechanical tones of an organ, but from the *hearts* of pious men! The discordant voice, the dragging note, could be overlooked, and even enjoyed, when prompted by *devotion*. A choir of male voices, chaunting the praises of their Master, must indeed be overpowering!

As the professor rose to give utterance to the prayer in which *every* heart could join, Frederick bowed with unusual reverence; for there is a feeling peculiar to such an assembly. You realise more than ever the presence of your God, when you know that only his people, his chosen ones, are around you. But are all students, all ministers, his chosen ones?

So *they* say. But what thinks the world, for whom they profess to toil? See what Frederick writes to his mother:—

"I confess my disappointment. For one month I have struggled against it, blinding myself to the plainest of facts; but it is of no avail. The ministry, perhaps I should say, the *growing* ministry, are not worthy of their high office. They know not their privileges; or, knowing them, are not deserving of them. They are men — mortal men — vain men — ambitious men. Their *own* advancement, *their* success, *their* reputation, is the prominent thought."

Again he writes:

"You remember the description I gave you of my first sabbath? The students have since begged me to join their choir; and the first time I did so, it was with a gush of deep emotion that I gave utterance to the feelings with which my very soul was full. I felt the peculiar solemnity of the scene, and was elevated by it. But fancy my dismay, as the hymn progressed, to see the whisperings, the shrugging of shoulders, and the sly winks, that passed from one to the other, at the expense of the unlucky member, whose natural voice was, to be sure, far from musical. I pitied the young man, and have since conversed with him; and found him far superior in real Christian feeling, to any one I have yet met. But it is not the true heart, the humble Christian, that is here prized; but the fine voice, and the fine rhetoric. My heart is sick, dear mother. In the very prayers, they whisper and laugh like college-boys. I fly to the beautiful walks that form the chief attraction of the place, and

mourn that it should be so. The veil is torn from my sight. Familiarity with the ministry has been injurious to me."

And later still, he writes:

"I begin to hope, dear mother, that I have wronged the ministers. They should not, certainly, all be judged by this seminary; for after all, it may be the fault of the professors here, that such a state of things exists; for I regret to say that they are not the men I had supposed them, having apparently stepped from the college to the seminary, and thence to the chair, without any knowledge of the world, or acquaintance with its characteristics, teaching only what they themselves were taught—a humdrum form of words. They have lived, too, so long in a small community, that they have all acquired an awkward stamp of seclusion, which in reality they feel, but do not acknowledge, even to themselves. What influence can such men expect to exercise over minds that are superior to them in almost every department of life? The manners, the appearance, the high breeding of a teacher, have certainly much influence upon his students. Surely some may be found who have gentlemanly manners, and some little acquaintance with the world, as well as the rudiments of theology; for after all, this is the most that can be taught. The best system of theology is but a very indifferent, unreliable explanation of what ought to be plain Bible truths; if it were not so, there would not be so many different sects. But adieu, dear mother. I fear this will trouble you; but you have planted the seed of inquiry, and it has taken deep

root. Strip things of the semblance the world has lent them, and they must be *true* indeed to stand the scrutiny of the present thinking generation."

But Mrs. Harvey was not troubled. She knew that all truth is established upon a firm foundation, and can stand the test of the closest examination. She did not fear for the *Bible;* and as for theology, why may it not be wrong? It was a system devised by fallible men. The world is in a progressive state; why may *it*, too, not be improved? So argued this wise mother, who had lived to some purpose. She had seen much of life; had tasted of its sweetest offerings, and drank deeply of its woe; and they had proved nourishing draughts of experience, forming her a strong-minded, sensible woman, free from prejudice and bigotry, those prison-bars to improvement. Well was it for Frederick that he possessed such a mother; for, born with dangerous tastes, with a sensitive and irritable nature, he would long before have been wrecked upon the rocks of pride and poverty, had not this noble woman borne him up, and by ceaseless and well-adapted efforts, brought him safely into port. His *heart* was true, and all was safe!

Mothers! What a power is in your hand, and yet how little do you use it!

CHAPTER SIXTEENTH.

Who can tell the joy that filled the heart of Harry as he opened the mysterious packet, so unexpectedly given him? For a moment, he had waited to recover from the surprise, and dwell upon the pleasure, the friendly face of Frank had excited, when, suddenly remembering the packet he was, however, holding tightly in his hand, he eagerly opened it, but almost let it drop, as Ellen's loving eyes shone kindly upon him from her beautiful miniature. Yes, the miniature so carefully criticised and directed by the fastidious taste of her father, was now his own. He had often seen it, and as often coveted it. Had her father consented to the gift? His heart fluttered with awakened hope, but only for a moment; for of course that could not be, or he would also have allowed their correspondence. Ellen, then, must daringly have taken it; and so she had. She had been commanded not to see him, and not to write to him. She had given her word, and she would keep it. But when the hour came for his departure, and she knew the grief that would have filled her heart, had it not been for that farewell letter, she sympathised with what she felt would be his feelings, to leave without a word, a token; and she determined at all hazards to cheer his drooping soul. As quick as thought she had remembered the miniature, taken

it from her mother's dressing-room, and sent it. It was a second giving of herself to Harry! and so he viewed it. So entranced was he with the possession, that he had forgotten the world and all around him; when a traveller who had taken a seat beside him, exclaimed—

"That's a lovely face, very!"

An indignant glance shot from Harry's eyes, as, closing the case, he placed it in his bosom.

"You need not be angry, sir. I meant no harm," said the stranger.

But silently Harry buttoned his coat about him. Hereafter his treasure should be secret, hid from every eye but his. He felt as if the strange though kindly glance of another had been a sacrilege. Folding his arms together, he gazed intently from the window, thus effectually silencing his companion, who soon after changing his seat, said—

"He's a green one, and will find the world a tough customer;" an opinion in which all agreed, who met him on that journey; and many pitied him the lessons he would have to learn; for his bearing was too proud, and his manner too haughty, to please the rough but good-natured citizens of Ohio. But Harry was living in the future, and could not *come down* to the present, and see himself as others saw him, "a young man seeking business, as they all were, at the mighty West." "These men," he thought, "know not the high destiny that awaits me, and the wide gulf that is between us." He "was not bound to the West to be *of* them, as they appeared to think, but *above* them, to stand and receive from them the homage that was his due,"

The evening, however, before their arrival in Cincinnati, he was somewhat discomfited at a remark he overheard from one of the passengers, who had announced himself, upon various occasions, to be a successful tailor of that city.

"Pooh!" said he to a friend, who was wondering who that proud stranger was, "he is nothing but a lawyer, and those we have don't make a living; the city is full of them."

"He will have to come down from his high horse, I guess, if that's the case," returned the other. "We don't give our business to gentlemen who hold their heads so high they can't see us, but to jolly hand-in-hand fellows like ourselves."

Harry changed his seat, and for the remainder of the evening had some troubled thoughts.

Early the next morning, a gentleman announced their approach to the city. Harry started from his seat, and sought the deck. His heart beat high. There lay the to be birth-place of his future fame! (The town of D—— was but a temporary spot upon the horizon of his fancy.) So engrossed was he with the visions presented to his excited imagination, that any unpleasant feelings which had been awakened on the journey, and even the home and associations of his childhood, were for the moment forgotten.

Having determined not to continue his journey until the next morning, he made several inquiries concerning the place; and ordering a horse, galloped to what he was told was the most commanding height about the city, studiously avoiding a backward glance, in order that the scene might be

presented suddenly to his sight. Who that has visited the Queen City of the West, can ever forget the emotions excited by such a view?

Harry gazed long, for his first quick breathings and throbbing pulses, as he looked upon the mighty city at his feet, fancying himself a part of its growing greatness, gradually gave way to saddened thoughts; for that fair paradise of nature, with the surrounding hills forming a high wall about it, seemed rather intended as the abode of some band of kindred spirits, who, retiring from the bustling world without, might seek and find contentment there, than as a site for the Babel that was covering its plain.

Laborers were to be seen in all directions, levelling those beautiful environs, the fairest ornament of the scene, as if the buildings they erected could prove of fairer structure. Man destroys the beauties of nature without remorse, to provide for the coarser wants of fellow-men. How much more *heart* would there be in cities, if Nature's handiwork was more respected!

Harry was sobered by these reflections. What a speck, too, upon the face of the earth, was even that mighty city! and yet he had gloried in the anticipation of its applause. He had been living in an unreal world; and after all was gained, what then? The good of our being *will* force itself upon our consciousness at times, and make us sensible of what we are. The spiritual *will* assert its supremacy, and point the mind to the true and only path of glory!

Slowly he paced his room that night, quieting the various emotions the scene had awakened; and one would have thought him necessarily a better and a wiser man. But the morning light dispersed those

pure, ennobling views of life and its true end, and Harry resumed his journey with his wonted pride. The great work of his life was about to commence. He would see Mr. Holmes that afternoon, and the next morning would greet him as a practising lawyer! To us, dear reader, the "practising attorney" may be symbolical of anything but glory; but to the young aspirant for fame, it is sweet, for is it not the first step of the ladder?

Harry was somewhat disappointed as he entered the town of D——; for, although it was a regular built, neat, and even pretty place, still it was but a town, and not to be compared with the city he had left behind. It galled and fretted him that such was to be his field. "But no matter. It is only for a while," he thought; "my next step may be to Washington!"

With feelings such as these he entered the office of Mr. Holmes, a straight-forward, pleasant gentleman, but with little of the world's polish and refinement. As Harry presented Mr. Johnson's letter, he glanced around the small, uninviting room, with a feeling almost amounting to contempt; and had about determined to reject the situation, when Mr. Holmes, closing the letter, said that "he regretted exceedingly that he should have had the trouble of the journey, for he had just two days before formed a partnership with a lawyer in the vicinity."

The scales fell from Harry's eyes; and the place just deemed contemptible, when apparently his own, assumed an astonishing importance when no longer within his reach. What was he to do? Return home? impossible! Pride restrained him; and yet

he had not the means to travel further, or remain there long.

Mr. Holmes, reading the distress depicted upon his countenance, kindly offered him an introduction to a friend in Cincinnati. "Mr. Reide, he knew, would not only be glad to show him every attention in his power, but would use every effort to forward his wishes. He was very sorry he would not be able to assist him further, as he was to leave for the East the following morning."

Harry could do no more but thank him, and accept the letter.

CHAPTER SEVENTEENTH.

It was upon one of those beautiful mornings in October, when all nature cries "shame" upon the insensate who lingers at home, that Mr. Gray, having ordered his buggy to the door, went into his library to while away the time until it should be ready. A large volume was taken from its resting-place, and opened before him; but there his reading ended. He was grave and dispirited; for his thoughts were far away with his favorites. All scattered and gone! and his memory took up the thread of their past lives, and lived them over again. They were once more babes, boys, youths, and now men. Mr. Gray was a philosopher, in his way, as we all are; and

was now comparing their past with their present, and prying into futurity. He understood the character of each, and knew their aims and wishes; but he also knew the rocks and shoals upon which so many others had been wrecked; and while he sympathised with their enthusiasm, he trembled for their success.

Harry's letters were unsatisfactory; relating more of the country, of persons, &c., than of himself. This was strange, for egotism was one of Harry's foibles. Is it not always the accompaniment of youth's ambition? Frederick, too, the object of so many prayers and tears, seemed in a sad state of mind. He wondered that his mother was not uneasy. "She is a daring woman," he thought, "to encourage such a taste for inquiry. Religion is a thing of faith, not of reason; and she, *a woman*, ought certainly so to have considered it. If I did not *know* her to be a Christian, I should almost be inclined to doubt it; for her influence in this respect is undoubtedly bad. I must talk to Frederick about it. It will never do for him to change his profession; and this is certainly a strange way of preparing for it. And Frank, too! why it seems as if all their heads were turned. He, of all mortals, to be picking up new theories! I wonder what his fashionable father will say to it?"

Here Mr. Gray took up a letter he had just received from Frank, and commenced its reperusal. Let us take a peep over his shoulder.

"DEAR UNCLE GEORGE:—It is only two months since I have been here, and you would hardly know me. I am beginning to *think*, if you can imagine such a thing possible. But the fact is, my *name* is

no longer a passport. *Frank Clifford* is nobody. I must have opinions, and know, too, how to defend them. A new school to me, who have laughed and talked at random all my days, believing just what was told me, from the 'old wolf' of the nursery, to the whole catalogue of *Materia Medica*. This did very well, I find, at home, where every body agreed with me; for there was no need of defending principles that no one doubted. And I, you know, am an easy dog, with no great love of study, or desire of learning. But here you are attacked upon every side. I have changed my boarding place three times already, to try and get rid of it, but to no purpose. I was first introduced into a very "respectable and select" house, kept by a "real lady," where every thing was as nice and as neat as possible. But you must, in return, be as regular as clock-work, and as stiff as a poker. This they call *gentility*. The first morning that I took my seat at the breakfast table, the boarders looked at me most curiously, as if I were an object of especial wonder to them. I began to be fidgety, and ran up to my chamber and looked in the glass. 'Perhaps I have shaved only one half of my face,' I thought. No, all was right. I turned round and round; not a fault, all was *comme il faut*. Psha! it is only my handsome phiz they are admiring, thought I; and so, well pleased, went to my lecture. But it was the same at dinner; and I was again wondering what the deuce it could mean, when two ladies entered the adjoining room. They evidently supposed I was out, for they discussed me pretty freely, with the door open. Mine was ajar, too, and, I am ashamed to confess, I right behind it.

"'What a pity,' said one, 'that he should waste his time upon such an old dilapidated system. Allopathy is dead, or only fit for the old simpletons who have grown up in its practice. How *can* a young man be so behind the age?'

"This, then, was the wonder. That night at tea the conversation, for my benefit I supposed, turned upon medicine. An old lady wanted to know how much was an ounce of water? Luckily I knew that much. But when they all, at once and the same time, began to question me as to the difference between the Homœopathic and Allopathic systems of medicine, I was nonplussed. For, what had I to do with Homœopathy? my business was with Allopathy. However, I was a little ashamed, I must confess; for, after all, it is only knowing *one side* of the question. Therefore, how can we judge between the two?

"I ate nothing that night, or the next day, or the day after. I was in a fever of fright. Homœopathy was the regular topic of conversation — it was food and drink to those people. So when the week ended I paid my bill and decamped, drawing a long breath, and feeling my appetite running to meet me. I took pretty good care, I assure you, not to enter any more *very* genteel boarding-houses; so I enquired of the students, and went where several of them were staying. 'Here at least," I thought, 'we shall be strong-handed.' I was elated at the change, and filled my plate most bountifully.

"'What would become of us without Homœopathy?' said a lady opposite to me. My knife dropped upon my plate. 'My little boy had the croup last

night,' the lady continued, 'and I was very much alarmed, as I always am, and sent for the doctor, who dissolved eight or nine little globules in a half tumbler of water, and gave him only a teaspoonful of the dilution, and, would you believe it, he was relieved in ten minutes, and slept sweetly all night.'

"'It is wonderful,' said another; 'now the Allopathists would have administered the most nauseous of medicines, the child would have been sick all night, and looked pale and miserable to-day. It is strange that physicians are so blind.'

"'Old physicians of course,' said a third, 'have an interest in keeping up the delusion, for their subsistence depends upon it. But how young men can consent to be so duped, *is* a marvel!'

"Now all this had been thrown *at us*, and so far they had kept the field. But now there was a pause, and I waited to hear my fellow-students take up the gauntlet. At length one of them very faintly alluded to 'the age of the system.'

"'Yes,' said the lady who had first spoken, 'it is so old as to be in its dotage.' Another pause.

"'What did the world do before this wonderful discovery?' gasped forth another student.

"'Died, to be sure; my mother lost three children with the croup.' Here *was* a poser. I had paid my week in advance, but I took my baggage and departed; and am now breathing somewhat freely at an hotel. But I cannot help *thinking* and wondering; I must really begin to study. The world *is* in a progressive state, and why should we lag behind, and wait for public opinion to *drive* us on? But I am growing eloquent, I believe, which being a folly

in my vocabulary, I will say good-night at once. Do give my love to the girls, and comfort poor Ellen sometimes; tell her it won't be long before Harry makes a fortune. I thought Mary was growing thin, too, before I left. I wonder if there is any thing between Fred Harvey and herself? You, who know every body's secrets, must certainly know this. I pity her if there is, for she must read her own doom in Ellen's. I wrote Susan this morning, and sent my own messages; so once more good-bye; from

"Yours most dutifully,

"FRANK."

Mr. Gray finished the letter just as Frederick Harvey entered the room. "Why, my dear boy," he cried, knocking over a chair in his eagerness to welcome him, "I am right glad to see you. When did you come?"

"Last night; I couldn't wait for the morning train," said Frederick, "I was so impatient to get among civilised people again."

"Fie! fie! I must have a talk with you about these things, before you commit yourself. So come and ride with me, and let us quarrel it out at once."

"Most gladly," said Frederick, laughing and taking up his hat. "And now what have I done or said that is so very dreadful?" he asked, as they slowly ascended the hill.

"Well, a great many things. In the first place, you must not speak so lightly of ministers; it is irreverent in you."

"Irreverent! why they are but flesh and blood like myself."

"They are the ministers of God," returned Mr. Gray, solemnly.

"And so we all are, if we do our duty. We are ministers of good or evil in all situations of life," said Frederick, who had now become grave and serious, as he saw that Mr. Gray was really in earnest. "But I grant that the profession of a minister is a peculiarly interesting one, and worthy of the highest respect; but it must be exercised by men of an enlightened character, and whose efforts are directed solely to the service of God, and the good of their fellow-beings. But how rarely is this the case; and it is of this deficiency that I complain. The ministry is as sacred as ever in my eyes, but not, I regret to say, the ministers."

"These students may not be such as they ought," returned Mr. Gray; "but you should not judge ministers generally by them. They are as yet unripe and unprofitable; but time may develop and improve them."

"So I hoped at one time," said Frederick; "but I am now almost convinced to the contrary; for I have seen much of the professors and of the missionaries, both domestic and foreign, and have held conversations with, and attended the preaching of many of the most distinguished of the clergy; and, I grieve to say, I have been disappointed in them all. Some, to be sure, display talent and exegetical skill; but for the most part, they are uneducated, bigoted men."

"Uneducated!" exclaimed Mr. Gray; "why they have all had the training of schools, and colleges, and seminaries, I suppose, and what more do you want?"

Frederick smiled. "All these are necessary," he said; "but to little purpose without accompanying thought and observation. They are but the foundation of the structure. Most boys at school and at college think only of the lessons for the day. Reflection is the fruit of riper years; and my observation so far has led me to think that it is at this point that ministers begin to fail. They are at once excluded from all intercourse with the world, and immured not only in the seclusion of some retired seminary, but in the thicker walls of self-esteem and ignorance. They reverence themselves as beings of a superior order, merely because others appear to think them so; and encase themselves in pride and bigotry the very moment that they don the black coat. Then is their education, in fact, at an end. For four years they associate with none but their counterparts, and study but one system of theology; the same that has existed for centuries, and which has become trite and unprofitable to minds which, in the mean time, have been progressing in every other branch of learning. They adhere to the form, while the substance, the life, has departed. Religion is like the dove from Noah's ark, without a spot to rest her foot upon."

Mr. Gray had long since ceased to interrupt Frederick, for how *could* he be answered? "Well, my boy," he now said, "*you* are right, I see, and God knows I am glad of it."

"But you don't know what I have suffered, Uncle George," said Frederick, sadly. "I went so eagerly to my work, with so much respect for the clergy and their high office, that I thought I had nothing to do but to listen and learn, and then to preach and to do.

But now I feel that I have but little prospect of accomplishing anything but my own improvement. I had hoped to be of some service to mankind, and for a time I could not give it up. But the struggle is somewhat over. God has strengthened me; and I am now willing to await his time and his will."

"What do you mean?" inquired Mr. Gray; "you don't intend to give up your profession?"

"No, but it will give me up," said Frederick, with a bitter smile. "The mass of the people are accustomed to follow their ministers blindfolded, and to be led by them as little children. They have apparently forgotten they have minds of their own, and are responsible for their belief. My doctrines would therefore be accounted heresy by them. They are too simple to be thought true. It is strange that men who think for themselves upon every other subject, will consent to be so led upon the only subject that is of vital importance. But so it is. It is the habit of years — a habit bequeathed from generation to generation. Its origin was natural enough, for in olden times, the clergy were the only educated class, and all others were comparatively ignorant. But now it is just the reverse; for while they have remained stationary, the other classes have been advancing, until at length they have outstripped them. Yet the chains of habit still bind them."

"Perhaps it will be your high privilege to unloose their bands," said Mr. Gray, encouragingly; "and, by the way, I have just had my eyes opened to another matter. What is all this between Mary Clifford and yourself? Come, you are all my children, you know, and must have no secrets from me."

Frederick, who had blushed like scarlet at the first mention of Mary's name, had now recovered the "pale cast of thought" which was the habitual expression of his face, and answered quietly, "Nothing has passed between us in words; but I think she understands my feelings, and would respond to them if it were possible. But that dream, too, is vanishing; I *had* hoped one day to have it in my power to offer her a position, which even her father might be proud of. But now, there is nothing but starvation and contumely before me. A pretty prospect, truly!"

"Courage, courage," said Mr. Gray, turning away his face, to hide the sympathy he could not control. "Keep up a brave heart. The world is before you."

CHAPTER EIGHTEENTH.

It was with a heavy heart that Harry Selden retraced his steps toward the city he had left so buoyantly in the morning. He was now, indeed, a stranger in a strange land, "seeking business with the herd, at the far West!" Was he fitted for the encounter? No: the little experience he had already, had shown him the truth. It needs an energetic, enterprising, and not *over*-refined nature, to succeed in such a country. Still, he must make the attempt.

Several days, however, elapsed, before he could

bring himself to call upon Mr. Reide; for he had always been averse to letters of introduction, and particularly to asking favors of a stranger. But his case was urgent, and at length he made the call.

Mr. Reide received him not only politely, but with great kindness; for Harry was not one to be lightly valued. His pleasing address and distingué appearance, were such as to make him acceptable in any society. Every possible attention was therefore paid him, and he was introduced to a large circle of acquaintance, among whom was Judge G——; who, as soon as he became aware of his wish to establish himself in business, invited him to make use of his office and his books, until he became better acquainted with the city and its inhabitants; an offer which Harry immediately accepted, and which once more buoyed him up with hope. But it was only for a short time; for business was dull that season, and he an utter stranger. Society can shower favors upon its favorite, but can never advance his interests. In fact, it is rather a hindrance to a man to be young and fashionable. So Harry found it, and his diminished purse constantly reminded him of his inactivity. In the midst of festivities, his heart was bowed with care, and he pined for one moment of repose. When night had dropped her curtain, and every living thing sought rest, he tossed feverishly upon his bed. Another day had passed! Could he enjoy the comforts for which he had not the means of paying? This state of things, however, could not last; and Harry at length became convinced that if he was to *wait* for business, it must be in a smaller town, where his expenses would be lessened. But his new friends

and acquaintances plead with him to remain, prophesying future success and fame; and Harry, beguiled by their kind words, still lingered on, until necessity compelled a change.

Many months had thus been wasted; and now, drained of the contents of his purse, he must launch his frail bark once more upon the sea of Life. Gladly would he have turned homewards. But he knew that to fail in any undertaking in the commencement of one's career, however little one is to blame, stamps one forever with the world; and he determined that none should know of his disappointment. And Ellen—how could he inflict so severe a blow upon her? The letters he received from Frank were full of hope and confidence; how could he destroy such expectations? The miniature he had at first so dearly prized, now became a source of the intensest pain to him. Those eyes, so beautiful and loving; were they to be dim and tearful on his account? He almost wished he had never seen her! Thus his letters had been as Mr. Gray had described them, unsatisfactory, relating to the country, the customs and manners of the people, of every person, and of every thing, yet never of himself.

But youth is sanguine; so that when turning over a file of papers one morning, as he sat in the reading-room trying to forget himself and time, he accidentally noticed that an old classmate of his was editing a southern paper. New hope sprang up within him, and he quickly determined to find him out, and obtain through him, if possible, the business so eagerly desired. He now felt that even the editing of a paper would be a most enviable occupation.

Much, however, was to be accomplished before he could commence his journey; for his purse was almost empty, and his bills were all unpaid. Should he write to his mother? no, he could not, for he had not yet forgotten the ungenerous treatment he had received from her. What then could be done? Painfully the truth forced itself upon his mind. His father's watch, bequeathed him by his own lips the day before his death, and his father's books, a box of which he had taken with him, must now be sacrificed to meet his wants! Harry was proud, and a bitter cup was held to his lips. The struggle was severe; but at length that necessity which is oftentimes our kindest friend in moments of doubt, compelled the decision and the action.

The result was far better than he had anticipated; for the books were valuable, and brought more than he had supposed possible, not only defraying all of his past indebtedness, but leaving a small supply for present wants. This, he determined, should answer his purpose, for the watch, now that the *necessity* was over, he *could* not part with.

Thus Harry, with scarce enough to carry him to his journey's end, felt rich as he stood upon the wharf, conscious that the gifts of those he had loved were still secure in his possession.

The noisy, puffing boat pushed off; and Harry smiled as he drew a breath of relief at leaving the city which he had so lately entered with such glowing anticipations. How changed he was! how much older! and how much wiser! But the visions, the sweet fancies of youth, where were they? With experience we lose freshness. Nothing new is gained

but at the expense of something before possessed. Experience clogs the wings of Hope, and knowledge lays bare our ignorance.

"Have you procured your ticket?" asked a gentleman, taking a vacant seat by Harry.

"No; I can get one at any time, I suppose."

"Yes, by paying half as much again, as I have just done. They tell me it is a trick of these people to make all the passengers who neglect to 'make their bargain,' as they term it, before they start, pay well for the whistle. They'll not catch me again."

Harry's heart sank within him; he had calculated the passage at the customary price, and had but a bare sufficiency to take him through. Trouble seemed the accompaniment of his life, and disappointment his portion. But necessity was again his friend. He had no time for thought, for doubt, for despondency. He therefore hastily sought the ticket-office, where, finding the gentleman's statement confirmed, he enquired the various stopping places above Natchez, to which city he was going; and suiting his ticket to his purse rather than his inclination, determined to walk the distance for which he could not pay.

The matter being settled, Harry felt free to enjoy the luxury of repose, which for a day or two would now be his. He was changed, greatly changed. Experience had taught him that there is good in all things, if we would but wait for and receive it. "Every cloud has its silver lining," every being his redeeming trait. The future no longer offering tempting visions to his fancy, made him friendly with the present; and one who had travelled with him

upon his former journey, would have been astonished to see him now; for it was with pleasure that he met the advances of those around him, and added his mite to the general entertainment.

The hours sped quickly and pleasantly. A kind word here and there, made friends of all. So that, when they approached the point at which he was to leave them, many hands were shaken, many regrets expressed; and friendly glances rested upon him, as, stepping upon the wharf, he turned a wistful look upon the departing boat, which could so soon have taken him to his journey's end. But none suspected the burden upon his mind. The day of respite down the "Father of Waters" was at an end, and he must again be *doing*. We are made for action, and yet how hard at times the task!

Another annoyance, too, now awaited him. The landing-place, a possibility of which he had never thought, had proved to be upon the opposite side of the river; and how was he to cross? Harry felt that even annihilation would be a relief. When occupied with the merely animal wants and external necessities of our being, we no longer live. That "breath of life" breathed into our nostrils by the living God, was not given for such a purpose. Life, thus spent, is but a false nature, not worth possessing.

"Want a carriage, sir?" now asked a negro, rousing Harry from his revery.

"No, I wish to cross the river. Have you no small boat that could take me over?"

"Berry hard work dat, sir," said the negro, scratching his head, and looking thoughtfully. "But I'll see what I can do for you, sir."

After a short absence the man returned, accompanied by a good-natured looking fellow, who, taking his hat off, led the way to his boat, which was moored a short distance down the river. Harry jumped in; but as they pushed off from the shore, was much surprised to see the man to whom he had first spoken, and who had followed with his trunk, take his seat also at the oar. "It was quite unnecessary," he thought, "for *two* oarsmen." But remonstrance would now have been useless. "There will be double to pay," he thought, "and I have little enough for one."

Harry was a stranger to that strong current, and would have been far more distressed had he known how much talking about "the rich young gentleman" had been necessary to induce the boatman to undertake the job at all; for crossing the Mississippi was no slight matter. Lucky, then, was it for him, that his oarsmen were of that peculiar race, whose favorite creed it is to translate a "young gentleman" into a being of infinite purse and generosity. "A handful of change" might be well worth working for. While they thus reasoned, and pulled stoutly at the oar, Harry gazed wistfully across the river. It was still early; and were he only upon the other side, he could easily walk the remaining fifteen miles in season for a good supper with his friend! His very nearness to the city made him the more anxious to be there. Once in Natchez, and all would be well; but delay would be terrible. He was therefore much annoyed to find the boat going up the stream

"Where are you carrying me?" he asked. "I wish to cross the river."

"Crossin' now, sir; bleege to go dis way, 'count ob de current. A bold stroke of the oar accompanied the words; and the boat gaining upon the distance, showed Harry practically the philosophy of the passage. Thus they toiled, laboring for a chance stroke to help them on, till it was high noon; and as but two-thirds of the distance was crossed, he was beginning to give up all hope of reaching the city that night, when the negroes, laying down their oars, and wiping their brows, exclaimed, that "the worst was over." They were beyond the force of the current, and a few minutes more would land them.

"Poor creatures!" thought Harry; "how tired they must be; how hard they have worked, and how uncomplainingly! And for what? my small mite. It will never do." He was still anxiously turning over and over in his mind his means of rewarding them, when he was surprised to find the boat approaching the shore, at an apparent distance from any house.

"Where is the town that I was told was opposite to M——?" he asked.

"One mile above," was the answer. "We drift dat much wid de current."

What, then, was to be done with his trunk? He had intended leaving it at the hotel until it could be sent for. He certainly was most unfortunate. But a bright thought relieved him; it would be a good excuse for not paying the fellows.

"Look here, my lads," he exclaimed, "what am I to do with my trunk?"

"Dunno, massa; can't lef um here."

"Well, I'll tell you what; you must take charge of it."

"Oh, yes sir; we can do dat," returned the negro, hat in hand.

"Well, but it is a valuable one, and although you have worked hard, it will scarcely do to trust you too far. So I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll put my clothes up in a bundle, and you take the trunk with you and keep it until I call; which if I don't do within the week, you may sell it, and divide the profits for your labor. Will that do?"

"I spose so, sir; but we—" the man hesitated, and again scratched his head.

"Rather have the money, eh?"

"Why, yes sir; money is money."

"I tell you I'll redeem the trunk, and pay you for taking charge of it; and if I don't, you can sell it. So come be off; here is a little change to get you a drink," he continued, giving them his last penny; "mind you take good care of my trunk."

The sight of the silver, little as it was, restored the negro's temper, who, cheerfully taking up the trunk and promising the utmost care, departed.

Harry turned towards his bundle. It was heavy and it was large; and now that the pressing need was over, he felt the degradation of his position. Walk fourteen miles, and with a bundle! Fourteen miles! There was certainly no time to lose, then, for it was late; too late, he feared, to find his friend that night, even if he reached the city. This reflection decided him; quickly shouldering his bundle upon his cane, he walked steadily on.

The road lay upon the banks of the river, and was

easy and pleasant to travel; while the numerous boats and rafts within sight, and other peculiarities of the country, kept his attention so constantly exercised, that Harry was much surprised to see the sun sinking to his rest.

"Night already," he thought, "and where am I? How far have I to go?" But there was none to answer, for he met no travellers on the way. Anxiously he pressed on, hoping every moment that the distant lights of the city would become a beacon for his steps. What, then, was his dismay, as he reached a sudden turn in the road, to find an old timed mile-post, pointing to the city as still six miles distant! He was weary and he was hungry. Hotels he knew there were none; for he had long since passed the town above spoken of; and even if he should meet with one, how could he afford to seek its comforts?

The case was plain; he should certainly be obliged to seek shelter for the night at one of the many residences that line the river above the city. But pride restrained him; and dwelling after dwelling was passed, some objection being made to each, to excuse his indecision, until at length darkness gathered so fast about him, that he mechanically turned down an avenue of oaks leading to a house so well lighted, that it seemed purposely to invite the attention of the passer-by. And as he lifted the old-fashioned knocker, he felt sure that he had reached, at the last moment, the proper place.

"Is your master at home?" he asked of the man who now opened the door.

"Yes sir; won't you walk in?"

Leaving his bundle in the verandah, Harry followed the man, and was soon ushered into a spacious drawing-room, to which, however, a blazing wood-fire gave an air of cheerfulness and welcome.

Judge Coleman, a gray-haired, intelligent-looking gentleman of about sixty, stood before the fire-place with his hands behind him, intently watching the opening of the door, as if he really hoped it might give entrance to a visitor. His face, therefore, brightened with pleasure as Harry, advancing towards him, apologized for his intrusion.

"I am a stranger in the country, sir, and the night is so dark that I shall be compelled to intrude upon your hospitality, if convenient to you."

"Indeed, you confer quite a favor upon me," said the judge. "I was just wishing a companion for the long evening. Take a seat by the fire, sir. I will have your horse immediately attended to," he added, pulling the bell as he spoke.

The color mounted to Harry's temples; but he instantly replied, "I have no horse with me, sir; I walked."

"And a beautiful walk it is, by the bank of the river," returned the judge, who had, however, noticed his momentary embarrassment. "Order in supper," he added to the servant who answered his summons; "Mr. ——?" turning an inquiring look upon Harry.

"Selden," he answered.

"Mr. Selden will spend the night with me."

The hours passed rapidly; and Harry retired to his chamber late in the night, full of contending emotions. The conversation had been delightful; and his whole being felt its high influence. Law,

politics, and literature, had been the topics. He had been in his element, indulging freely his natural character; a treat which had long been denied him. "This is the life I need," he thought, "and *must* lead. This striving for mere bodily existence is dreadful, withering!" He was excited and nervous; for many times during the evening, there had been something, "a word, a tone as light as air," which had irresistibly drawn him towards his host, and almost compelled his confidence; so that it cost him an effort to resist the impulse of frankly stating to him his present position, and asking his advice. This he now turned over and over in his mind; and was fast concluding to consult him in the morning, when sleep, induced by the fatigue he had undergone, came to his relief.

Pleasant dreams to thee, Harry! The darkest night is oftentimes the precursor of the brightest day.

CHAPTER NINETEENTH.

JUDGE Coleman was of mixed French and American origin. His parents dying when he was a mere infant, had left him a large and handsome fortune; but so completely in the power of his guardians, that by a union of fraud and foolish speculations, they soon contrived to rid themselves of the trust, leaving the boy, when not twelve years of age, penniless and almost friendless; so much so, that he was glad at

one time to seek employment as a common worker upon a farm. But strength of will was in him; and he determined to obtain such a position for himself, as would one day enable him to make known his wrongs, and assert his rights. Step by step, he had worked his way along from the farm to the school, thence to the academy, to the college, and to the bar. The first case he tried, was his own; which, although he lost for want of witnesses and sufficient proof, yet so won him the favor of the court and of the citizens, before whom he had drawn a touching history of his life, that business of various kinds flowed in from every side. At first the work was hard, for it was the *drudgery* of the law. Copying papers, reading tedious title-deeds, suing for small bills, &c. But his perseverance and industry gaining him the confidence of the people, they soon acknowledged his superior talents, and gladly threw their best business into his hands; until, growing older, and wishing the retirement of the country, he accepted the judgeship of the county; and at the time of young Selden's visit, was a man of property and reputation, with a ready sympathy for all who were treading in his footsteps.

Harry slept late the next morning, and was a little mortified as he entered the parlor, to find that the judge had not only breakfasted, but had already perused his newspaper.

"I am very late," he said.

"You slept well, I hope," returned the judge.

"Rather too well," said Harry, laughing.

"Not at all; I ordered the servants not to disturb you. Breakfast is always a desultory meal here, no

two of us ever taking it together. Mrs. Coleman's health is so delicate that she is compelled to keep her chamber most of the time; and the children are such very early risers, that their day is nearly over before I am up."

This was his first allusion to the family, and explained the reason of their uninterrupted evening.

Harry had scarcely finished his breakfast, when the judge invited him to his library. "It is my pride," he said, "not crowded with books 'bought by the foot,' but each selected with great care by myself; the print, paper, and matter, all good."

And so was every thing. The book-cases, the chairs, the sofas, the writing-table, inkstands, etc., all complete.

"This *is* inviting," said Harry, glancing around with evident pleasure.

"I am glad you think so. Take a cigar, and let us have a little talk as we smoke away the time; for you must not think of leaving me to-day. I have a great deal to ask you; but will first tell you a little of my own history, so that you may feel confidence enough to tell me yours, which, I confess, I am anxious to hear."

"And which I have been most desirous of telling you, but feared it might prove an infliction."

"Not at all. Let me hear the whole, and from the very beginning. You can know nothing of a man until you know how he has been brought up."

"My life has been short," said Harry, hesitating; "but I feel as if it had been very long."

"The first years of life are always long; there are so many changes. Each year is a marked one, and

each series an era: childhood, youth, and a little touch of manhood, I suppose," he added, smiling.

"If twenty-one years supports the claim," said Harry; "but if it does not, I am sure the last year's experience will."

"I will decide the question after I hear the evidence," returned the judge; "so begin regularly. I see you don't fancy your cigar, so throw it aside, and now begin."

Harry's story was soon ended; for it was, as he had said, a short one, and he told it shortly, but with a point and feeling, which explained to the judge much that he had left unsaid. His father's love, of which he scarce could speak, showed him to have been worthy of that love. The winning of the college honor, which he but indifferently mentioned, proved him deserving of reward. The recommendation given by Mr. Johnson proved him competent for business; and his manliness of action subsequent to his disappointment proved him worthy of sympathy and esteem.

The judge listened quietly; but his face expressed his satisfaction to the very end, when, throwing aside his cigar, he sprang from his chair, and extending him his hand, said: "Come, let us strike a bargain; I can't let you leave me. If you will work with me at these musty old papers," pointing to a bundle of deeds, "I shall be heartily obliged to you, and can keep you well supplied. But if that doesn't suit, something else will, if it is only talking and riding with me."

Harry gazed upon him with astonishment. "You are not in earnest?" he asked.

"Indeed I am; and if you only say you will stay, I'll tell you soberly all about it."

"If my services are really needed," said Harry, "I assure you I shall be but too happy to render them."

"Well, they are most sadly needed. I have done my share of hard work, and want now to enjoy a little comfortable ease before I die. But in order to do so, I must have the assistance of just such a person as you are, in whose talents and character I can place the fullest confidence, besides enjoying the society of a most agreeable friend and companion, which, I confess, I need as much as I do the help. It was for this express purpose that I asked your history; I fancied it very much as it proves. Mankind and life are pretty much the same every where."

A knock at the door, followed by the entrance of a servant, now interrupted him. "Mrs. Coleman would like to speak to you, sir."

"Very well," answered the judge; and turning to Harry as the servant left the room, he continued: "I will be back directly; in the mean time, make yourself at home, as I hope you are."

"Thank you," said Harry, smiling.

The judge now sought the apartment of his wife. It was upon the opposite wing of the house, corresponding to his own favorite retreat, the library. Evidently no pains had been spared to render it the abode of comfort; but it also appeared to be the scene of sickness and of suffering. Damask curtains drooped from the windows and the bed, protecting the invalid from the slightest breath of winter; and a luxurious couch drawn to the fireside, upon which

the sufferer now lay, showed that all that care could do to please and comfort had been done.

"You are late this morning," said Mrs. Coleman, as her husband approached the couch.

"Yes," he answered, touching his lips to her pale brow, "I have been so much interested in the young stranger—"

"That you forgot your wife," she retorted.

The judge bit his lips, but continued calmly. "He was telling me his story, and was in the midst of it when the time came for my visit, and I could not well have interrupted him."

"Certainly not; I am accustomed to wait."

"Carrie, why speak so? You know that I never neglect you intentionally. I thought of you several times, and fancied it would give you pleasure to hear something of his life."

"You are very kind; but I have enough to do to think of my own approaching death, without caring about the life of a stranger whom I shall never see."

"I am not so sure of that, for I hope to keep him with me; and I hope, too, dearest, that Spring will so restore your health, that his company will be a pleasant change for you, too. You are much better than you were."

"Better!" exclaimed his wife, bursting into tears. "How little you care about me!"

"Carrie, you are very foolish, and only make yourself miserable by such feelings. What temptation shall I have to visit you at all, if you behave so? Come, let me give you a drive this morning; you are

looking so prettily that I want young Selden to see you."

"You constantly praise my looks, and yet you don't care any thing about me," said Mrs. Coleman, still sobbing, as she, however, wiped her eyes and arranged the ribbons of her cap.

The judge knew her weak point; and often, when affection failed, resorted to flattery as his only resource. It was successful now; for although she declined the ride, saying she "was wasting away, but he *would* not see it," she nevertheless entered into all his plans, talked pleasantly of Harry, and finally so worked herself into a good humor, that she sent for the children, whom she scarcely ever saw, and noticed them so kindly, that they afterwards wondered together "what *could be* the matter with dear mamma?"

The judge sighed as he left the room. "What a good wife she might have been, had she only chosen it!"

Carrie Duncan, when he married her, was celebrated for her beauty; and so admired was she for her singing, that "the sweet songstress of the South" was her common appellation. Her painting, too, was exquisite; and her taste in poetry unexceptionable. Yet many wondered at the judge's choice. "A man of sense," they would say, "ought certainly to know better; what has taste to do with every-day life?"

"Much, very much," thought the judge. "And if her temper is not the most amiable, I shall see that there is nothing to excite it; so what does it matter? And as for general education, life, with its attendant

practicalities, will insensibly supply all deficiencies." And so she became Mrs. Coleman, the envied, and the courted!

But sickness followed. She was nervous, and must be indulged; the worst thing even for the best of tempers. And when she was better, quite well again, in fact, she could not forget the privileges of the sick, but must be treated just the same, every whim indulged, and every notion humored, until she became a burden to all around, and even to herself. The sickness she so fostered grew upon her by her own wilfulness. It was interesting to languish; she would, therefore, take no exercise. She was too ethereal for common food, and tampered with her appetite until it left her. She was too weak to sing; and the pleasant evenings so prized by the judge were to be lived again only in the past.

It was a dreary, dark hour of the judge's life when all this broke upon his mind. But he had married her, and must fulfil his vows. And well had he fulfilled them, bearing with, and humoring her as no other would, devoting as much as possible of his time and thoughts to her happiness, while all others, weary of her fretfulness, neglected and shunned her, until at length she, too, grew weary of existence, and retired to her room, as she said, "to die."

Thus had the judge's hopes of domestic happiness been blasted. The children, who might have been a comfort to him, he seldom or never saw; for they had always been banished the parlor, their mother "being too delicate to bear their noise;" and so his home was lonely, and his heart desolate.

Was it, then, surprising that he should desire the

companionship of Harry? Yet little did he realize the value of the prize thus secured. A sunbeam had indeed entered his dwelling, spreading light and joy around, until soon all felt and acknowledged its influence.

CHAPTER TWENTIETH.

"WHERE is Mr. Selden?" inquired the judge one evening, of the footman.

"Gone to ride, sir."

"In what direction?"

"I b'lieve he gone to de settlement, sir," said the man, somewhat hesitatingly. "But he say he will be back directly."

"Order my horse round;" and the judge impatiently walked up and down the verandah, wondering to himself why Mr. Selden had not waited for him as agreed, and what business he could possibly have at the settlement. "I hope he is not tampering with my people," he thought. But just then the groom approached, and the footman bringing his whip and spurs at the same instant, he quickly mounted; but with a frown upon his brow which was immediately reflected upon the countenances of the negroes, who looked ominously grave, until, seeing him turn into the road just taken by Mr. Selden, they both smiled, showing their white teeth from ear to ear.

"I wonder what massa gwine to say?" said the groom.

"He'll eder be bex, or he'll laugh," returned the other, oracularly. And this was precisely the doubt felt by the judge himself, as, galloping quickly on, he soon overtook the party before him. It consisted of Harry upon horseback, holding the bridle in his right hand, while upon his left arm he bore a lovely girl of four years old, who, when he first saw them, was laughing merrily with two boys; the one about ten, the other eight years of age; who were both clinging to Harry, holding tightly on behind.

"What is all this?" asked the judge, as the party, hearing the approaching gallop, naturally turned to see who the rider was.

The children looked frightened, and hung their heads; and Harry seemed doubtful whether it would not be best for him, too, to follow their example; for the judge, he knew, was very particular about his horses, and as they had agreed upon a long ride that evening, he ought not, perhaps, to have taken this liberty. The children, however, to whom he had already attached himself, had begged it of him; and, poor things! they had so few pleasures! how could he refuse them?

While these thoughts passed rapidly through his mind, the judge, irresistibly amused at their evident perplexity, exclaimed, "Four upon one horse! that will never do. Come, hand Ella over to me," leaning forward, as he spoke, to take the child; who, however, nestling herself in Harry's bosom, sobbed violently.

"Ella," said Harry, soothingly, "it is your papa; he is going to give you a ride."

"Not if she doesn't wish it," said the judge, reining back his horse.

Harry now turned quickly to the boys. Edward, the youngest, still blushed and hung his head; but Robert, looking timidly up, and reading Harry's expressive glance, said, "Will you take me, papa?"

"If you wish it," returned the judge, coldly. But as he lifted his son upon the stirrup, and felt his arms twined about his waist, his heart yearned towards those little ones, and almost for the first time, he *felt* that he was a father; and when they returned home, and Harry held up the little Ella to give him a parting kiss, he clasped her in his arms, and grasping the hand of Harry, said, "God will bless you." From that hour, all was changed. The still verandah echoed merrily with the laugh of happy childhood. A new pony pranced upon the lawn, which Robert, striking his boot with his showy riding-whip, proudly called his own; while Edward talked largely of "the one papa had promised him, too, when he should be a little bigger." And Ella! sweet little Ella! what a pet she had become, nestling ever in her father's arms!

How many rays of sunlight are about us, if we would but open our windows, and receive them! Judge Coleman, whose heart was now overflowing with joy and gladness, but one short month before had been a lone and desolate man! How often do we pine at our fortunes, and blame the Father of all good for the rough and thorny path allotted us, when, if we would but lift our eyes, running brooks,

and fields of living verdure, would greet and refresh them! Why grasp the briars, and search for pebbles by the wayside, till we become dim and toilworn, when sweet flowers are springing around, waiting to be plucked? Is there one among the living who says he has no ray of comfort? Let him open his window, and it will enter, scattering all gloom and darkness!

The judge now wondered at his former blindness, and mourned over his wasted years; for how many treasures were still his! So visible became his happiness, notwithstanding the unceasing fretfulness of his wife, which increased as she felt her power to irritate becoming more and more feeble, that one day, tempted by curiosity to see the stranger who she felt must be the cause of this sudden and wondrous change, she ventured feebly into the parlour, as if the very effort would seal her doom.

She was leaning upon her husband's arm; and as Harry looked up with surprise from the book in which he had been reading, and met her soft, languishing eyes, and gazed upon her pale, but still beautiful features, he could not conceal the admiration she excited. Carefully he arranged the sofa for her; and so won upon her favor by his naturally kind and sympathising manner, that she was afterwards easily induced to exchange the monotonous retirement of her chamber, for the now attractive parlor.

"Mr. Selden," as she informed the judge, "did not shock her sensitive nature, as most others did; his voice was so subdued and low when he spoke to her. He seemed, too, to realize the delicate state of her

health; and was so kind, and so anxious to please, that she really felt a pleasure in his society."

The judge smiled, and said, "He was glad that it was so; he was sure it was much better for her than the close confinement of her room, and her looks already proved it."

"And my spirits, too," she said. "For now that Mr. Selden reads to me, I have always something to interest me, something to think about, besides myself. How dull we were before he came!"

"Yes," answered the judge, "we all have much to thank him for." But as he stepped out upon the verandah, conflicting emotions filled his soul. The remarks just uttered by his wife, proved how little she had cared for him, how little she had appreciated his long and constant attention, and for a moment he was discouraged and disheartened; for although the love that he had at first felt for her, had long since been as a dream of the past, yet her very dependence upon him had its charm, which even now it was hard to relinquish. "She have no interest in life!" he repeated to himself, as with folded arms he paced his library. "With a husband who could so have loved her, with children of whom any mother might be proud, with the means of effecting so much good, and dispensing so much happiness to the many around her—*she* have nothing to interest her! It is all the result," he continued, vehemently speaking aloud, "of selfishness; utter, wilful selfishness!"

He threw himself into a chair: his feelings were bitter. "What right had she so to throw away the happiness of others? to sacrifice all about her to her idol self? He would submit to it no longer. She

should hear her character as it was; should know her duties, and should perform them." But harshness was not natural to him; and the very determination to treat her thus, seemed at once to soften him. Better thoughts thronged upon his mind; and, resting his head upon his hands, memories of bygone days swept before him. He recalled the early days of his courtship—the faults even then perceptible in her character, notwithstanding all her fascinations—and his own deliberate venture; and felt that it was too late to shrink from the consequences. "And after all," he thought, "she is more to be pitied than blamed. Her education was for society, not home; and, poor creature! she has paid dearly for it."

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIRST.

Not many days had elapsed after Harry's introduction to the hospitable mansion of Judge Coleman, when he took the opportunity afforded him by a visit to Natchez, to find out his former classmate, the editor, from whom he had contemplated obtaining such relief. This, to be sure, was no longer necessary, and now not even to be mentioned. So quickly do our feelings follow the tide of our affairs! Yet the obligation upon Harry's part still appeared so great to him, that Edward Leslie was both surprised and flattered at the evident warmth of feeling with which

he was greeted; and from that hour became his warmest friend, neglecting even pressing duties to pay him all the attention in his power; showing him the curiosities of the city, accompanying him upon his excursion to D—— in search of his deserted trunk, and making daily inquiries at the post-office for his letters; which to Harry, who lived some miles from the city, was the greatest of all possible kindnesses.

But weeks flew by, and many visits were exchanged between the friends, without tidings of his Northern home. Harry had directed all his letters to Cincinnati to be forwarded to Mr. Leslie's care, and could, therefore, form no reasonable excuse for their delay. Yet, as he had not heard either from his mother or sisters, he still hoped from day to day that each arriving mail would produce the long wished-for packet.

It was, therefore, with visible excitement that one afternoon, when sitting with the judge over their wine, he arose to meet his friend, who unexpectedly entered. His quick and searching glance had at once detected the desired bundle looking out from his pocket; and scarcely could he wait until the customary salutations had been exchanged before he extended his hand to receive it.

"What! so quick of sight? There must be some love affair, I guess," exclaimed Edward Leslie, handing the packet to him and then suddenly withdrawing it; and turning to the judge, proposed they should first examine its contents.

"Nonsense," said the judge, who perceived the great agitation under which Harry labored; "I'll

answer for their character. Mr. Selden is not a bird to be easily caged."

Harry's pale face blushed to crimson. He had never mentioned his engagement to the judge, or named Ellen in any way, from feelings of instinctive delicacy, which, however, he now regretted, as he feared that it might hereafter appear to him as a want of confidence. This, however, was not the time for explanation; and abruptly excusing himself, he withdrew to his chamber.

The Postmaster had written a long letter of apologies, excuses, etc., for the delay, none of which Harry stopped to read; but tearing open the outer envelop, he turned over letter upon letter, which for weeks had been collecting at Cincinnati; and at length when the fact was certain that there was no word from Frank, no news of Ellen! he sank into a chair, overpowered by his disappointment. Of what priceless worth would have been those pages so ruthlessly consigned to the flames!

Suddenly a letter from his sister, which he had carelessly thrown upon the floor, met his eye. Possibly it might solve the mystery. Hastily he ran over the contents. It was from Emma, his favorite sister; she had been sick, very sick, and wished much to see him. But her affectionate words were all unheeded, until at length his eye caught the name of her he loved. "Ellen," she wrote, "is well, but looks pale, which, however, makes her more interesting and beautiful than ever; her spirits, too, are so low, that her father intends taking her from home."

"Fool that I am!" exclaimed Harry; "why have

I not written her? Who knows but that she, too, may have been waiting, heartsick, as I have been, for letters."

As quick as thought he seized his pen and wrote eagerly and rapidly; and when the letter was finished, he smiled to see the bright coloring he had used, and pleased himself with fancying the pleasure it would afford her. What would *he* not give for such a letter!

His other papers now attracted his attention; and so absorbed was he in their contents, and in their reply, that he was much surprised when he was summoned to tea.

Edward Leslie had remained to see and to joke him; but the joke that now had no sting could be parried; and the judge was well pleased to see by his altered manner that the cloud which had been fast gathering around his heart, robbing his smile of its sunshine, and overshadowing the brightness of his present home, was now dispersed; and that from that time he once again talked, laughed, wrote, and studied, with all the enthusiasm of ambitious youth.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SECOND.

The breaking up of winter, that most execrable of all seasons to a New Englander, found the Clifford family in an equally dull and listless state. The home-circle where no sympathy and no confidence exists is one most barren of interest.

As they sat around the breakfast-table one morning, the postman's budget of papers and letters was brought in. Mr. Clifford seized the former with the avidity of a man who is tired of himself and uneasy at home, and must, therefore, seek excitement from a public source; while Mary examined the letters to find their owners.

"One for you, mother," she said, "from aunt Jane; and here is one for Frank. Why who writes Frank from Natchez?"

At the first mention of Frank's name and the letter, Ellen had started from her seat; and the beating of her heart could almost have been heard across the table.

"Why, Ellen, how nervous you have grown," said her mother; while Mr. Clifford, taking the letter from Mary, carelessly broke the seal, and running his eyes over the contents, said —

"Ah! from Edward Leslie, an old classmate of Frank's. You remember him; he spent the evening with us at New Haven. He is editing a paper, it seems. I will forward it to Frank."

This intelligence he had gleaned from Harry's letter, and thus made use of to serve his own purposes. But as he placed it in his pocket, and carelessly resumed his paper, he involuntarily glanced at Ellen, and almost relented of his determination as he saw the tremulous lip and tearful eye with which she left the room. Ill-fated letter! written for that fond heart, yet destined only to meet those cold eyes, and be reduced to lifeless ashes!

"Your aunt begs for another visit from us all," said Mrs. Clifford, turning to Mary as she read the concluding sentence of her letter; "but I for one would rather be excused."

"And I for another," said Mary; "I am in no mood for her balls and routs."

"But you ought to be," said her father, sharply. "Ellen and yourself have both disappointed me very much in that respect. It is sheer ingratitude, after all the pains I have taken to fit you for society."

Tears rose to Mary's eyes. Several times of late had her father thus spoken to her, and her gentle heart was grieved; silently she arose and left the room.

"How cross you have grown!" said Mrs. Clifford to her husband.

"Who would'nt be cross," he returned, "with two such wilful, headstrong girls? There is Mary; what is the matter with her is more than I can tell; but it's mope, mope, mope, from morning until night. And Ellen, I suppose, is still sighing after that scapegrace, young Selden."

"Young Selden! no indeed; she has forgotten

him long ago; and he has her, too, I suspect, for nobody ever hears a word from him."

"You women always know every thing. I tell you she knows more of him than you think for, and I intend she shall go directly to New York. I have been wishing for a long time to take her away, but no place suited exactly; so this invitation from your aunt is just in time."

"You tried it once before, but it did no good," returned his wife.

"And I'll try it again if it pleases me," said Mr. Clifford, once more resuming his paper.

His wife sighed. She was a worldly woman, and had loved her children for the world; and she, too, had been disappointed. But what was that disappointment in comparison with the change which had come over her husband? Of him she had been as fond and as proud as her nature was capable; and yet she, who had never yet withstood his will, must also bear his cross and surly humors. An evil conscience is a man's worst enemy; and ever since his unkind and unjust treatment of his daughter, his temper had become unsettled and irritable. The amiable, kind, society-loving Mr. Clifford had degenerated into a cross, sour, harsh man, shunned by his former friends, and hated by himself.

"Have you written to Frank?" asked his wife, after a few minutes of silence.

"No; there is no such desperate hurry that I know of."

"He will be very much disappointed," continued his mother.

"Well, let him be; so am I about a great many things."

"But not in him; I am sure *he* has done everything to please you."

"Yes, because I have always pleased him. But this studying in Paris looks too much like making a business of it."

"Why, then, did you let him study at all?"

"Because he wished it, that was all; and who supposed that *he* would ever do any thing? I am willing he should travel; but this practising his profession, that he writes about, is not to my taste."

Mrs. Clifford was silent. This was a new phase of the matter. In their last conversation upon the subject, Frank's homœopathic tendencies had been the reason assigned for the refusal of his request; nor had he intimated a willingness that he should go abroad upon any terms. She could not account for this change; for she could not suspect the anxiety he now secretly felt to get rid of Frank, as the convenient and pliable *third* party to the plots of the lovers. His prejudice against Harry had first grown into dislike, and then to hatred, as the cause of all his disappointments; and upon no terms would he now consent to receive him. Yet he was evidently as hopeful and eager as ever, and again he began to fear for the consequences. "But get Frank abroad, and Ellen to New York," he said to himself, "and for a time, at least, there can be no communication."

While these thoughts flitted through his mind, Mr. Gray was slowly ascending the stairs, and now entered the room. He appeared to be feeble; and

Mr. Clifford instinctively arose, and assisted him to a chair.

"I am sorry to see you looking so badly," he said. "We heard you were much better."

"Yes, better; but not so very much, either, as all of my young folks insist upon believing. Poor things! they will miss me sadly when I am gone."

"I hope it will be some time before they are tried," said Mrs. Clifford. "My girls could hardly live without you."

Mr. Clifford bit his lip, as he busied himself with the fire. He had been growing jealous of Mr. Gray, of late; for he felt, and justly, that he was becoming the recipient of all the affection he was himself so recklessly throwing away.

"Ah, here they come," exclaimed Mr. Gray, as the girls both hastened into the room, joy sparkling in their eyes.

"How kind in you to come and see us," said Ellen, stooping to kiss his pale brow.

The traces of tears were still visible upon her cheek; which Mr. Gray perceiving, he lifted his hand and patted her tenderly, putting, at the same time, with a cautionary glance, a packet in her hands. "They may be my parting gifts," he said, extending another and similar one to Mary. "But now be off with yourselves," he lightly added, as he saw that Mr. Clifford was about asking for Ellen's packet. "I want to have a little talk with your father and mother; mind, no eaves-dropping."

Gladly the girls departed, for each felt that there was more in those little volumes than merely printed words. That invalid frame was far too feeble to

have ventured out, but upon some errand of love; and truly had he brought balm for the dispirited heart. Harry's long letter to him, full of hopes, of plans, and of Ellen, hid within those leaves, reassured her drooping spirits; and as she sank to sleep that night, happier than she had long been, a smile played upon her lip, telling to her fond and watchful sister, that her dreams were pleasant ones.

CHAPTER TWENTY-THIRD.

Singing birds, and sweet flowers, came with the opening spring; and joyous children welcomed them with shouts of merriment. Mrs. Coleman sat at the open window, and saw ever new and varying beauties in the former "tiresome old shrubbery;" while the judge, well pleased that all seemed happy, reclined indolently upon a lounge in the verandah, watching the curling smoke of his cigar, with the interest of a little child, who had no call either upon its time or thoughts.

"What has become of Mr. Selden?" he suddenly asked, turning to his wife.

"He went into his chamber to write, I believe. He is not so agreeable as he used to be."

"I won't quarrel with him about that," said the judge. "But I fear he is not so happy."

"It is his own fault, then," returned his wife,

sharply. "He has everything to make him so; and is much better off, *I* believe, than he ever has been before."

"Psha!" said the judge, "what have externals to do with the heart?"

"With the *heart!*" repeated his wife, who thought with most of her sex, that the heart could only be affected by the gentle passion; "why he surely has had no one since he came here, to fall in love with."

But as she spoke, the color mounted to her cheek. Woman's vanity whispered of conquest; and the suddenness of the thought prevented its concealment. But as her husband instinctively turned to see if she had intended anything, he felt convinced that, however true her suspicions might be, they had been entirely accidental, and quite as great a surprise to herself, as they were to him. "No wonder if it is so," he thought, as he resumed his former position. "She certainly is beautiful enough!" But he felt no jealousy; and smiled bitterly as he muttered, "*she* has not *heart* enough to fall in love."

"What do you say?" asked his wife.

"That it is time for my ride," he returned; and throwing aside his half-smoked cigar, he walked to Harry's room and called to him, saying, "Come, you have written long enough; let us have a ride together."

"With pleasure," said Harry, opening the door, and with a smile so frank, that the judge laughed at his late suspicions.

"Nothing false there," he thought.

But as they were riding down the avenue, he was again startled by Harry's first remark.

"I fear," he said, "that you will find me but a dull companion."

"Why so?"

"Because my heart is heavy," returned Harry, determined, now that he had so good an opportunity, to make up for his long-withheld confidence by a full avowal of his love and engagement to Ellen.

"Relieve it of its burden, then," said the judge, encouragingly; who, although he had no doubt that his late suspicions would now be verified, yet pitied far more than he blamed him. "You know I promised to be a father to you, and I will keep my word, whatever it may be."

"Thank you," said Harry; "you have always proved yourself most kind. But there is nothing here that either you or I can do; it is about my letters that I feel so troubled."

"Your letters? what, from home?"

"Yes, and from friends who are still dearer to me, perhaps."

But his faltering voice was unperceived by the judge, who, relieved by his answer, felt that such a trouble was indeed slight.

"Mr. Gray, I suppose, you have not heard from?"

"No, I have not; and I begged him, too, to write at once."

"Oh, well, well, it will all be right; and you must have more pluck than to mope as you have been doing, about mere letters. I was afraid it was some outrageous crime that you were committing, or about to commit. Ah! how do you do, Walter," he exclaimed, as upon a sudden turn of the road

they met a dark-complexioned, well-whiskered young gentleman; "when did you arrive?"

"Last night, sir, and was just coming to report myself."

"Well, I am heartily glad to see you. Let me introduce you to my friend Mr. Selden. This is Mr. Elmore," he continued, turning to Harry, "my sister's nephew, of whom you have heard me speak. And now we will turn our horses; Mrs. Coleman will be delighted to see you."

"Thank you, sir; but I should prefer calling upon her some other time, for I am in a great hurry this evening, and merely meant to look in upon you. I have an important engagement to-night, and can spare but a few moments."

"If that is the case," returned the judge, "I will not detain you at all, but accompany you upon your way back to the city, and have our chat and ride at the same time."

But Walter, who had been absent a year or two travelling through various parts of the world, had so much to tell that was interesting to his companions, that they accompanied him much further than the judge had at first intended; so that when they turned towards home, they found that it was already quite dark.

They were now, therefore, obliged to ride so carefully, that neither of them reverted to their former topic of conversation; and Harry, who felt rather rebuffed at the *tone* of the judge's remarks, little imagining how trivial his distress appeared to him in comparison to the confession he had expected,

resolved hereafter to say nothing more upon the subject; for the judge, he was now convinced, would look upon the affair in its most ridiculous light; and he "need not expose himself unnecessarily," he thought, "to his pleasantries."

They at length reached the avenue, and were just in sight of the house, when Harry exclaimed, "Fire! fire in Mrs. Coleman's room!" and putting spurs to his horse, galloped forward, and leaping from his saddle, rushed directly to her chamber.

The first sight that met his eyes was Mrs. Coleman lying senseless upon the floor, a short distance from the bed, which was enveloped in flames. But knowing that he was closely followed by the judge, he intuitively left her to his care, and exerted all his powers to stay the fire, pulling down almost upon himself the heavy drapery, which was fast spreading the flames, and directing the frightened efforts of the servants who now, also alarmed, had come to his aid.

It was some time, however, before they succeeded in extinguishing it, when Harry turned to seek the judge, who, taking his wife in his arms and immediately leaving the scene, had not yet returned.

In a distant apartment, as far removed as possible from the noise, he found him busily engaged in chafing her hands and temples. He asked no question, but seemed totally forgetful of the fire, which, had it not been for Harry's active exertions, would in all probability have destroyed his mansion. His deep compassion for his wife, whose terror he could imagine, absorbed his whole mind. And not until the physician, for whom he had immediately sent,

had arrived, and he had seen her returning animation, and that every possible comfort and attention was provided for her, did he fully realize the danger from which he had escaped, and the extent of his indebtedness to Harry.

"You have saved *her!*" he now said, turning to him; "much, much, have I to thank you for."

But days wore on, and not all the physician's care nor her husband's watchful kindness could restore her feeble strength. The shock upon her nervous system had been too severe for her weak frame to struggle against; and after a week or two of lingering suffering, her spirit winged its flight.

Alas, poor Carrie! How much action will thy disembodied soul require to wake up those dormant faculties, and prepare thee for Heaven! There is a preparation necessary for the wedding-guest! But we will not doubt thy religion, thy fitness for eternity; God knows thy trials, thy temptations, and thy weakness; and it may be that those who educated thee, the guardians of thy tender years, will be called upon to answer in part for those wasted energies, for that aimless, objectless existence!

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOURTH.

THE dwelling through which death has lately passed we are all apt to look upon with awe; and yet how soon are the dead forgotten and out of mind! Well is it, perhaps, for mankind that it is so; and yet it is a melancholy fact; for all of us sooner or later must be the one whose turn it is to go.

A few weeks after Mrs. Coleman had been borne to her silent chamber, all traces of the fire which had caused her death were removed. The room so lately hers was refurnished and almost remodelled, so that had she suddenly returned, it must have been as a stranger "whose place knew her no more."

Not that her husband had forgotten her, for he was a kind-hearted man, and had mourned as much as could have been expected, and more, perhaps, than many would have done under the same circumstances. But life is made up of action; and when his sister, Mrs. Lincoln, wrote and offered her company for a few months, he, of course, had felt it necessary to make preparations for her visit. And very natural, too, that he should gradually have become interested in the arrangements, and made more improvements than, perhaps, he had at first intended.

"My sister writes," he said one morning, addressing Harry, "that she will be here to-morrow to dinner. But that is impossible, for the boats from

New Orleans stop at Baton Rouge now only once a day, and that is in the evening, is it not?"

"Certainly," said Harry; "she has made some mistake. However, she will be in ample time to reach here by night."

"She wishes me," continued the judge, looking again at the letter he had been reading, "to meet her at the American Hotel. That is an odd fancy; why not go down to the boat?"

"She may have thought it a pleasanter arrangement in case either party were delayed."

"Very possibly. I wonder what kind of girl her daughter is. If she is like her father, we shall have our hands full."

"Have you never seen her?" asked Harry.

"Not for many years. She has been kept very constantly at a boarding-school; and, in fact, I have seen but very little of her mother, too."

The judge sighed as he spoke; and Harry, having heard Mrs. Coleman's description of the "tame Mrs. Lincoln," as she always called her, at once surmised, and truly, that her dislike had been the cause of their separation.

"I have told you her history, I suppose," asked the judge.

"Merely that she was a step-sister," returned Harry.

"Well, there is very little else to tell," said the judge; who, however, felt so much tempted to talk off the agitation he evidently felt, that after a slight pause, he continued:

"She is a daughter of my father by his first marriage. But her mother dying a few weeks after her

birth, she was adopted by her grand-mother, and carried to Cuba, where she resided during her childhood. So that I never saw, or even heard of her, until two days after I argued my first case in court; which being, as I have told you, of myself and my own affairs, introduced me into very general notice, and among others, to this long-lost sister; for she had lately married in New Orleans, and was then living there."

"It must have been a pleasant surprise to you," said Harry.

"Yes, she was very affectionate and kind to me; and from that time, I was a constant visitor at her house. Her husband was pretty wild, but full of fun and humor, which made him a favorite with every one. But, poor fellow! he finally fell a victim to his dissipated habits, leaving her with several children; all of whom, however, died off, one after the other, with the exception of Blanche, the youngest, with whom she returned to Cuba, hoping that the change of climate might be beneficial to her. This proving to be the case, she remained there until it was necessary to bring her back to receive an American education. It was at that time I saw her; but she was soon after sent to a boarding-school, which it seems she has just left; and I confess I have some curiosity to see her."

"I should suppose so," said Harry; "and you have made me feel the same."

"Yes, she will be company for you. I am afraid we shall find the house rather dull after they leave."

"Do they return to Cuba?"

"Yes, in the fall, unless we succeed in persuading them to the contrary."

"*We*," thought Harry, falling into a reverie, as the judge's attention was called off by one of the workmen. "He expects me, then, to continue an inmate here. Well, I certainly have enough to make me happy, and yet I am still unsatisfied; for, after all, I am *doing* nothing — nothing to make myself *known* or *felt*."

The next morning was bright and beautiful. But Cato, a favorite servant of the judge, was taken so seriously ill, that it was impossible for his master to leave the place; so that the pleasure of meeting Mrs. Lincoln and her daughter, of course devolved upon Harry.

He did not, however, wait for the evening; but, taking a horse, went quite early, so as to spend a part of the day with Mr. Leslie, whom he had not seen for some time; while the coachman, with the carriage, was to follow more slowly, rest his horses, and await the rendezvous of the party, at the American Hotel.

The hours, in the meanwhile, dragged heavily to the judge; who, as he impatiently paced the verandah, stopped every now and then to look into the distance, as if it were possible to hurry their arrival, by thus evincing his anxiety.

It was a vain attempt, however, to cheat himself; and he was upon the point of returning to the parlor, when he saw a carriage turn into the avenue. "This is singular!" he said; "those horses are certainly mine, and there, too, is Sam opening the gate; what can it mean?"

The carriage, by this time, had approached so near, that two ladies could clearly be distinguished upon the back seats.

"It *is* them," said the judge, hastily descending the steps. "Ah, sister, I am delighted to see you; and Blanche, too. Why what now?" he asked, as Blanche pouted her pretty lips, and tried to look angry.

"Why she insists," said Mrs. Lincoln, a little embarrassed, "that it would have been more attentive in you to have come in person for us."

"Hav'nt you heard how I was prevented?" asked the judge.

"Oh yes, you were quite excusable."

"I thought, too," said the judge, turning to Blanche, "that my substitute would have particularly pleased a young lady. But where is Mr. Selden?" he asked, looking around in search of Harry.

"Oh, he took care, too, not to come near us," said Blanche. "I suppose he was frightened half to death."

"Which any one would be that saw you now," returned the judge, pinching her dimpled cheek. "Come, let us make up and be friends."

Her uncle's kindness, and the evident pains that had been taken to make their visit a pleasant one, soon restored the spoiled girl's temper; and when they sat down to dinner, her bright smiles and cheerful sallies of wit recalled again and again to the judge his pleasant memories of her father.

"And so you spent the night at Baton Rouge?" he said.

"No," returned his sister, "we landed six miles below the city. I have an old friend residing there, and thought it would be a pity to lose so good an opportunity of seeing her."

"And Mr. Claymore had the politeness to drive us himself to Baton Rouge," said Blanche, with a slight toss of her head.

"Not forgiven me yet, I see," returned the judge; "come, fill your glass, and I'll drink this Mr. Claymore's health."

"Why you must know," said Mrs. Lincoln, "that it was his seeing the empty carriage awaiting us that Blanche minded so much. She was afraid he might think it strange."

"Indeed! well I will write him a letter to-morrow of explanation and apology. Will that appease you?" he asked, turning to Blanche.

"Oh, I don't care now any thing about it," she said. "But who is this Mr. Selden who was to have been our escort?"

"Ha! you are thinking of him now, are you?"

"Yes; I shall have rare fun with him; I love to tease these tutors."

"Tutor? who says he is a tutor?'

"Why he teaches Robert Latin, he tells me."

"Merely because he chooses it. He is an assistant to me, and a very valuable one, too, in my law business."

"Oh, well, it's all one; as stiff as parchment, I suppose, with a long nose and drawling voice."

"Who? *our* Mr. Selden?" asked Robert, who had listened in evident astonishment.

"Yes," returned his father, now determined to

prepare a surprise for Blanche, by humoring her fancy. "But, as I have always told you boys, notwithstanding his appearance he is my most particular friend and companion."

"Well, I'll try to be civil to him for your sake, and keep as quiet as can be," said Blanche; "for I never saw but one Yankee, and he used to give us long, dry lectures upon the evidences of Christianity. The girls called him a Puritan; but I *know* he was a Yankee."

"Did he tell you so?" asked the judge, smiling at her earnestness.

"Me? no indeed. I wouldn't have spoken to him for the world."

"How, then, are you so positive?"

"Because he told one of the girls that he was from Boston."

"And so you suppose that all Bostonians must resemble him."

"Well, not exactly," said Blanche, hesitating; "but they are different from us."

"That is, they have more learning and do less talking, perhaps," said the judge, smiling.

"*I* don't want any of their learning," said Blanche.

"Well, we'll see; I'll bet any thing you will be begging Mr. Selden before long to take you as one of his scholars."

"Not I, I have had enough of school; and now I am going to run off and see the place while you and mother talk;" and the wild girl left the room, swinging her hat upon her arm.

The brother and sister had not met for years; and although it was rather awkward to them at first "to

talk," as Blanche had left them to do, their conversation soon became interesting, personal, and even exciting, so that when Blanche joined her mother an hour after in her chamber, she was surprised to see the heightened color in her cheeks, and the renewed brightness of her eye, bearing witness to the interest and pleasure she had felt.

"Why mother, I haven't seen you look so well, or so happy, for years," she exclaimed.

"I *am* happy," returned her mother, mildly; her manner always being in striking contrast to her daughter's.

"Well, I don't, for the life of me, see anything to make one happy here," said Blanche, petulantly.

"I have not met your uncle, you know, my dear, for a long time," returned her mother; "so that I take a peculiar pleasure in seeing him, and in every thing that concerns him; and I am sure——"

"I verily believe I shall die here!" interrupted Blanche, throwing herself into a chair by the open window.

"How can you say so, Blanche? Your uncle is so kind and affectionate, and everything so pleasant. See that beautiful shrubbery; what delightful walks, and rides, too, you can take!"

"Who with?" asked Blanche. "You, uncle, or the Puritan?"

"Blanche! Blanche! you ought to be ashamed of yourself. Remember Mr. Selden is your uncle's friend; and even were he not, you should respect his feelings."

"I'll respect them enough, if he will please keep out of my way."

Mrs. Lincoln looked troubled. She had been separated so much, of late years, from her daughter, that she was still a stranger to her character; which, while really made up of strong points, was so badly trained as to leave her a misnomer to her best friends, whom she would one moment delight with her winning, artless ways; and at the next, by some rude revulsion of feeling, fill with sorrow and dismay.

After a few moments of silence, during which Blanche gazed from the window, her mother made another attempt to please her.

"That appears to be a very fine piano," she said, "in the parlor. A new one, apparently; so that you——"

"I *hate* practising," interrupted Blanche.

"You play so well," said her mother, soothingly, "that you can do without practising for a while, and only play the pieces you already know. Your uncle is very fond of good music, and so am I."

"I wish I never had come here," said Blanche. "Nobody to see — nobody to talk to. There's a horseman now, I do declare, coming up the avenue. Who can he be?" she said, leaning forward.

"Don't, don't, Blanche! he will see you."

"I hope uncle will ask him to tea," said Blanche, drawing the curtain over her face, but still looking out from behind its folds. "He is one of the handsomest men I ever saw. It is Cousin Walter! I am sure it is," she suddenly exclaimed, "for the children are running to meet him;" and she turned towards the door, as if to follow their example.

"Stop, Blanche! my child!" implored her mother. "You may be mistaken. It may be some one else."

"No matter. I must see him, mother, whoever he is;" and kissing her lightly on the cheek, Blanche bounded from the room, and in a few moments, her anxious mother heard her ready fingers running rapidly over the keys of the piano.

She was thus apparently busily engaged when the door opened, and Harry entered, followed by the joyful children.

"Oh, there's Cousin Blanche!" exclaimed Edward; and before Harry could effect the retreat he would have made, she rose from her seat, and advancing towards him, extended her hand, saying,

"Cousin Walter, I suppose."

"No indeed; it is Mr. Selden," said Robert.

"Mr. Selden!" exclaimed Blanche, suddenly drawing back, and surveying him from head to foot in visible wonder.

At this moment, Mrs. Lincoln, who felt too anxious to trust Blanche long to herself, entered the room.

"Mother, this is our Puritan!"

"Blanche, Blanche, how can you behave so?" asked her mother, much mortified. "Excuse her, Mr. Selden; she is nothing but a noisy child still."

"Why, who wouldn't be noisy, mother? Think what a metamorphosis!" and the rattling girl proceeded to tell Harry the whole story, but with so much drollery and naiveté, that he felt irresistibly attracted towards her; and was still standing hat in hand, in animated conversation before her, when the judge entered the room.

"What!" he exclaimed, "already such good friends? Take care, Blanche! take care!"

"I am scolding him for not meeting us at the Hotel," said Blanche.

"Where you could have shown him off to Mr. Claymore, eh?"

"Well, I don't know that I would have had *much* objection," she said, taking another survey of Harry, with mock gravity; "and I am sure it would have saved poor mother a great many heart-pangs about my '*dreadful* temper.'"

"If you learn anything by the lesson," said Mrs. Lincoln, "I will cheerfully bear my part of it."

Why then, poor mother, have left your child, in the moulding years of her life, to a boarding-school influence? Which is of the most importance, the discipline of the mind, or of the character? True, both are desirable; but one, and alas! the neglected one, is vital!

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIFTH.

THE summer wore rapidly on. How could it do otherwise, to the inmates of Claremont Hall? Blanche, full of life and spirits, was the centre of admiration to which the young, from all distances, from country and from city, felt themselves irresistibly attracted; so that her only complaint now was of company! company! company!

"I wish they *would* let us have *one* day to our-

selves," she exclaimed one morning, when quite an unusual number of small enveloped notes were handed her.

"What would you do with yourself if they did?" asked her uncle.

"Die of the blues, I suppose," she said, gayly laughing; then added, quite seriously, "But I really *am* tired."

"You are not obliged to accept *every* invitation," said her mother.

"Well, I shall refuse these, wherever they are from;" saying which, Blanche broke the seal of the most conspicuous. "A picnic! a picnic!" she exclaimed, "given by the gentlemen to the ladies. Oh, how delightful! And this," she continued, breaking open the others, "is from Edward Leslie, begging me to ride with him; and this from Cousin Walter, asking the same pleasure; and this from young Mr. Claymore, who has just bought a splendid new pair of horses, upon which he wants my judgment. Now what am I to do? who shall I honor?"

"Go with the one you are going to marry," said Robert, bluntly.

"Who says I am going to marry any of them?" asked Blanche.

"Why mauma says so."

"Well do ask her which one. It might save me a world of thinking."

"Oh, 'tis n't Mr. Claymore; she says you only like to go about with him because he always cuts such a dash; but you don't care half as much for him, as for either of the other two."

"Well, that's a comfort! He is rid of, for one;

and the other two may go alone or together, if they please, but I won't ride with any of them," said Blanche, throwing their notes upon the table.

"What will you do, then?" asked Robert.

"Why, stay at home, if I can't get any one else," she answered pettishly.

"I am always at your service, you know," said Harry.

"You'll scold me the whole way home," she answered.

"I have no doubt you will deserve it," said Mrs. Lincoln.

"Try me this time, and see," said Harry.

"Well, I suppose I shall have to," said Blanche, evidently pleased, however, at the arrangement; and taking up her pen, she rapidly wrote off her excuses.

Well pleased, too, were Mrs. Lincoln and the judge; for what better protector could she have than Harry?

"Do you really think he cares for Blanche?" asked Mrs. Lincoln the following day, as she stood upon the verandah with her brother, watching the young couple as they rapidly disappeared down the avenue.

"How can you doubt it? Didn't you see the kind, brotherly way in which he placed her in the barouche, and the interest he took in her appearance, dress, &c.?"

"Yes, and that is what makes me doubt," said Mrs. Lincoln. "Lovers are not apt to be brotherly."

"Oh well, but Selden is different from most young men; he'll make a much better husband than lover. I am amused sometimes to see the *care* he takes of Blanche."

Mrs. Lincoln made no reply; but looked still so very doubtful, that the judge continued more seriously: "I will give you stronger proof, as I see it is necessary, that what I say is true. Before Blanche came, Selden was as low-spirited at times as possible; so much so, that I was about as glad upon his account, as upon my own, that you were coming here, as I hoped it would cheer him; and positively, from the very first hour that he saw Blanche, I noticed a change in him—his brow cleared, his laugh grew lighter, and he has altogether been a different being."

"Why, then, does he not propose to her?" asked the doubting mother.

"That is the only part I don't understand," returned the judge, rather thoughtfully.

"Perhaps he thinks it would be presumptuous," said Mrs. Lincoln, "as I suppose he has little or nothing to offer her."

"As if *money* could add any thing to Harry Selden!" exclaimed the judge, indignantly.

"I am only speaking of what *he* might feel," returned Mrs. Lincoln, mildly; "Blanche has more than enough for them both; and I am sure I could give her to no one with greater confidence than to Mr. Selden."

"Why it would be the making of her," exclaimed the judge, who thought such praise far too lukewarm to be applied to his chosen favorite. "Blanche is a sweet little minx, to be sure, but she needs a strong hand to keep her in."

While they were thus discussed at home, Blanche and Harry were riding on, in full enjoyment of them-

selves, each other, the weather, and the anticipated frolic, little suspecting *they* could be the subjects of such a conversation. For Blanche, although she did enjoy Harry's society better than that of any one else, was too giddy and thoughtless to analyze her feelings; and had any one questioned her about them, would have wondered what they meant. Hers was a butterfly life, extracting sweets from every present flower, wholly unconscious that a setting sun was to close the advancing day. While Harry's deeper feelings were so entirely engrossed with the anticipations of a brighter and more glorious future, that he paid little heed to the flitting interests and slight emotions of the passing hour.

Thus differing in thoughts and feelings, hopes and fears, aims and desires, they nevertheless talked, and laughed, and sang together, until all around supposed them *one* in heart and mind. So little do those who sit upon the watch-towers know of the wizard play of the affections!

Harry, it was true, had been gayer and more light-hearted since Blanche's arrival; and she certainly had whiled away many an otherwise lonely hour for him. But the real talisman that had wrought the change so justly noticed by the judge, had been a letter received from Mr. Gray the very morning upon which he had gone to Baton Rouge to meet Mrs. Lincoln and her daughter; so that had Blanche even been old and ugly, she would still probably have basked in the sunshine of his feelings. From his letter he had discovered the solution of all that had perplexed him; for it told of Frank's winter sojourn in Philadelphia, and also of his

departure for Paris; of Ellen's trials, and yet of her constancy; and of Mr. Gray's recent recovery from a long illness, which had necessarily delayed his writing. Why should Harry not be happy? while *she* was faithful, the future *must* be bright!

"You will have your hands full to-day," said Blanche, as Harry lifted her from the barouche, and they proceeded to join the gay throng already assembled upon the appointed ground.

"How so?" asked Harry.

"Because I am going to be as wild as can be," she answered, "just to show uncle and mother that I am not so safe with you as they suppose."

"A noble resolve, truly," said Harry.

Blanche bit her lip. "He never *will* take any thing as personal," she thought; "instead of getting vexed himself, he always manages to turn the tables back upon me."

And herein, perhaps, lay the secret of his influence. While others flattered and courted, resented and apologized, he ever preserved his calm dignity of manner, either quietly amused at her witticisms, or sorrowful at her rudeness; thus easily gaining the respect and esteem that others sought for, but in vain.

The day wore on, and Blanche, true to her word, gave way to an unusual exuberance of spirits. While Harry, keeping sufficiently near to her not to betray the trust tacitly imposed upon him by her guardians, took no notice whatever of her, not even by a look of reproof; for he saw that her object was evidently to provoke or distress him, and he resolved that she should be disappointed.

At first Blanche took great pleasure in thus indulging her humor. But when her spirits had somewhat spent their force, she began to feel the consequent reaction; and before the close of the day would have given worlds for even a word of censure from Harry. But he kept purposely aloof, determined to teach her a lesson that would not be forgotten.

"You are tired," said Edward Leslie, noticing the constant effort she was obliged to make, to keep up the appearance even of enjoyment."

"Yes," she said, "I wish I could return home."

"And what prevents you? You will be sadly missed, to be sure; still, this is a public party, and all can leave as they please."

"Mr. Selden seems to be enjoying himself so much," said Blanche, evidently piqued, "that I should not like to take him away."

"*I* will drive you," said Edward, eagerly; for Blanche's manner during the day had filled him anew with hope, and he would gladly seize so favorable an opportunity to declare his passion.

"Oh, no!" said Blanche, "Mr. Selden wouldn't like it."

"What business is it of his?" asked Edward, with flashing eyes. "He has not been near you to-day."

"Because he thinks I have been acting foolishly," said Blanche, giving vent to the tears she could no longer control.

They were seated in a small arbor, concealed from the rest of the party; so that Blanche, whose nerves were completely unstrung, wept without restraint, while Edward, surprised and disappointed, turned away to hide his chagrin.

"No hope for me," he thought, "so I had better be off."

At this moment, Harry approached; and seeing Blanche in tears, inquired what was the matter.

"She can tell you far better than I can," said Edward, turning away from the arbor.

"Blanche, what is the matter?" asked Harry, taking a seat beside her.

"I don't know," she answered, still sobbing; "I cannot help crying."

"You are tired and nervous," said Harry; "the day has been too exciting for you. Edward," he continued, turning to Mr. Leslie, who was standing at a short distance, "order the barouche for me, will you? Blanche is not well."

"You are a cool fellow," muttered Mr. Leslie, feeling little disposed to comply with his wishes; yet at the same time, unable to resist the influence of his quiet tone and manner, he turned sullenly away; and soon after returning with the barouche, not only assisted Harry in rendering it as comfortable as possible for Blanche, but also lifted her into it; when, with a formal bow, he coldly left them.

Blanche, once more alone with Harry, felt rather provoked with herself for having given way to her tears; and, wiping her eyes, determined to be so cold and distant, that any inference he might have drawn from them should be entirely removed. After riding for some distance, and waiting in vain for Harry to open the conversation, her feelings suddenly changed; and somewhat embarrassed, but in an artless, winning manner, she looked up to him, and said, "Why don't you scold me?"

"Your conscience will do that," he answered. "But lean back, now, and be quiet; you have seen too much company, of late, and in future must be a little more domestic." But as he spoke, he turned towards her, and drawing her shawl more closely about her, smiled so pleasantly, that Blanche felt both relieved and soothed; and without a word, sank back into the barouche, as he had told her, to take the rest she really so much needed.

The next morning, however, she was still too much fatigued to rise; so that when Mr. Leslie called to say farewell, before his immediate departure for the East, she was unable to see him.

"What has determined you to leave so suddenly?" asked Harry.

"I have no fancy for broken hearts," he answered, laughing; "so, as there is no sort of chance for me, I may as well be off. These southern lilies are so capricious, that I will go and see what can be done with the northern roses?"

"That is the idea, is it?" said Harry, who now no longer doubted what he had before only surmised—that Mr. Leslie had proposed to Blanche, and been rejected. "Well, I wish you a successful journey. You'll find many a rare flower in New England."

"I am glad you say so, for you have shown such good taste in your own selection, that I prize your opinion."

"I hope you will be more fortunate, however, than I have been," said Harry, at the same time wondering where Mr. Leslie had obtained his information, and whether he had ever met with Ellen.

"Fortunate!" exclaimed Edward; "why what

more do you wish? she loves you as truly as I stand here."

"That may be," said Harry, slightly coloring; for love, and Ellen's love, was to him a sacred theme; "but the consent of friends is a most important matter."

"Oh, you'll have that," exclaimed Edward. "But here comes the judge, and I have no time to stop and talk, as he will make me; there is nothing to gain by it now, you know, so good-bye."

"Good-bye," returned Harry; "see all my friends, for I shall have much to ask about them when you return."

"I will," said Edward, who, mounting his horse, soon galloped out of sight, bearing with him the best wishes of his friend, who would so gladly have accompanied him.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIXTH.

MANY circumstances combined induced Frank Clifford to return from his European tour much earlier than he had anticipated. Paris, without the privilege of attending the medical lectures to which he had so anxiously looked forward, but which his father had at the last moment forbidden, did not fulfil his expectations; and the six months already spent there, preparatory to the commencement of his more

extended travels, had amply satisfied his desire for change. In fact, Frank was just in that transitional state which all must at times experience when a consciousness of the good within them, and of the desires and abilities of either the intellectual or the spiritual to elevate itself above the earthly and sensual being, incites to one course of action, while habit or circumstances point to another and contrary one.

Thus is it that wealth so often becomes a hindrance to the young; for opening before them, as it does, two paths of life, they are too apt to select that which, to the superficial observer, appears the easier and more certain one to happiness.

He now stood pausing upon the threshold of life; and, had necessity been his guide, his ascent to the heights of Fame might easily have been accomplished. But this, unfortunately, was not the case; and he turned, although with slow and reluctant steps, to follow the course dictated by his father, thus burying the talent that had been entrusted to him.

Having, therefore, no definite objects to accomplish by remaining abroad, he determined to accompany a party of friends upon their return home, and comply at once with the wish expressed by both Mr. Gray and his father, for his immediate marriage with Susan. For Mr. Gray's continued ill health naturally made him anxious to see his niece at once united to him; while Mr. Clifford, who really missed his son, and was glad of an excuse to send for him, was also well pleased at the step which was to make Frank, the bearer of his name and his only son, one of the wealthiest citizens of Boston; for Susan, besides

inheriting a large fortune from her parents, was also looked upon as the heiress of her uncle's wealth; to which Mr. Clifford now secretly determined that the bulk of his own property should eventually be added.

It was about the middle of October; and as almost all of the truant inhabitants of the city had returned to their homes, much gayety was anticipated, and Frank's arrival looked forward to as the signal for opening the season.

At length he came, and the ball was put in motion; for invitations to a large party given by the Chaunceys to welcome him, were immediately sent out, filling many hearts with joyful hopes and expectations, in which, however, Ellen, the most beautiful and the most gifted, the most courted and the most flattered, did not share. Fearfully she shrank from the approaching festivities; not that she had lost her taste for pleasure, or her pride and affection for her brother, but she dreaded the dangers to which they exposed her; for among the friends who had accompanied Frank, she had heard with dismay the name of Edwin Sanford. True, a full year had passed, with its weary, heavy hours, since last she had met him, yet she feared for this very reason that he might so have forgotten the past, as again to solicit her favor; and thus her heart was filled with fearful forebodings!

It was upon the morning of the day appointed for the party, that Edward Leslie arrived in the city, and calling to see William Chauncey, who had been an intimate friend in his early years, was persuaded to remain and partake of the pleasures of the evening.

It was just the opportunity he could have desired to see the assembled beauty of the North, and his light spirits rose with excitement; so that, when the hour came for the arrival of the guests, he laughingly stated his object to his friends, and selected the best spot from which he could view their entrance, in order, as he said, "to examine and decide upon their merits."

But party after party entered, and he shook his head upon them all. The rounded, graceful form of Blanche was wanting; the luxuriant chestnut curls, the light, buoyant step, and beaming southern smile, which filled his heart, could not be there competed with. "The milliners had done their part well," he acknowledged; "but Nature had been sadly deficient;" and with a mock sigh he was turning disappointedly away, to seek those unseen beauties of the mind, "of which," he observed, "he had often heard so much," when Ellen entered, leaning upon her father's arm, and followed by Frank and Mary.

"Splendid!" exclaimed Edward. "Beautiful!"

"Which?" asked William.

"Both beautiful," returned Edward; "but the first one glorious!"

"Surpass your Southern belle?"

"She is of a different order. What a slumbering soul shines from out those liquid orbs! Yet what repose in those chiselled features!"

"You are fairly beaten, then, eh?"

"Yes; the one is matter, the other *spirit*. Her very bearing elevates and stimulates you above yourself."

"Bravo!" cried William. "Come and be introduced, then; I should like to see you mount your Pegasus. Miss Clifford, allow me to present my friend Mr. Leslie, from Baton Rouge."

Mr. Leslie! and from Baton Rouge! The slumbering soul was awakened; and Ellen, who of late had seldom exerted herself to please, now surprised those around her by the evident pleasure she took in the conversation. He had been with Harry! he could tell her of *him!* Cautiously, however, she approached the subject, hovering for some time about the South, and about Baton Rouge; and had just composed herself sufficiently to ask, in a cool but friendly manner, "If he had ever met Mr. Selden there?" when her father stood beside her, his eye fixed threateningly upon her. He had just discovered who the stranger was, and had hastened to put an end to what he felt might prove a dangerous conversation; but Ellen's heart was now fearless, for the worst was over. The question had been asked, and her father had heard it; so, after introducing him to Mr. Leslie, she repeated it more distinctly, and even with more interest, than at first. Mr. Clifford understood her manner; it expressed to him the continued devotion of her heart to Harry, and her determination to hear now, all that she possibly could of him.

"Harry Selden!" exclaimed Edward. "Why, he is the dearest friend I have, notwithstanding he has cheated me out of the Cuban beauty." He could laugh now, for what was Blanche, when compared with Ellen?

"The Cuban beauty?" repeated Mr. Clifford, in

an inquiring tone, thus drawing his attention from Ellen, whose paleness he could well understand.

"Yes, she is a niece of Judge Coleman's, and has been spending the summer with him. Harry is a lucky fellow; for she is not only a gem of herself, but has many a goodly acre to deck her beauty with."

"And he is *really* engaged to her?" asked Mr. Clifford; who, although he could not but feel deeply for his daughter, was yet determined that she should hear the truth fully and distinctly.

"Yes, he told me so himself, the very morning I left," said Edward.

Ellen, who had quickly recovered the self-possession which for a moment she had lost, now surprised her father by the calm tone in which she continued to ask many questions concerning the judge's family, Harry's mode of life, &c.; and he could not but feel pleased at the perfect command of her feelings which she exhibited, and longed to take and press her to his heart. She was once more *his*, and he delighted in the possession. The evident admiration, too, which she had excited in Edward Leslie, also pleased him; for he had a father's pride in all her conquests.

But the charm of Edward's society was broken; unwittingly he had destroyed himself by his unwelcome intelligence, and he soon turned away, mortified and piqued at her increasing coldness and inattention.

"What is the matter?" asked William Chauncey, approaching him; "a little *pulled down*, I should think, hey?"

"I can make nothing of her," returned Edward; "she is entirely beyond *my* comprehension."

At this moment a gentleman, who was evidently crossing to the other side of the room, paused before Ellen, as his glance accidentally fell upon her, calling up for the instant a faint tinge to her cheek, which had again resumed its recent paleness.

"Ah! Mr. Sanford," she exclaimed, extending her hand to him.

Edwin shook it, but not warmly; he evidently had not forgotten the past history of their acquaintance; so after a cold salutation to Mr. Clifford, and a few general remarks to herself, he hastened, with visible eagerness, to join a group to which most eyes were from time to time directed; thus relieving Ellen of her recent fears, at the same time that it left her more at leisure to reflect upon all she had heard. Harry engaged! she did not believe it, and yet it was so direct. Mr. Leslie certainly believed it, and so do did her father. She knew not what to think.

"Who is that?" asked Edward Leslie, as Edwin now addressed a lady who appeared to be a general object of attention.

"You surely don't admire her?" said William.

"Bah! I am done with your beauties; now that girl has neither beauty nor sense to spare, I should say."

"No, but she has money enough. That is Miss Warner, the heiress."

"You don't say so!" said Edward; "well, she has a comfortable look, after all."

"Exactly so; that just describes her. She is not beautiful, and yet she is fine-looking; and as there is no need for her to be either sensible or witty, she takes no trouble about it. It is amusing to see the

quiet indifference with which she receives every one."

"She has waked up a little, however, since Sanford's approach."

"And so she might; rumor says they are engaged, or going to be."

"How? where did he meet her?"

"At Paris; they have been together all the summer, and returned in the same steamer."

"Ah! that is the party, then, that Frank was with?"

"Yes; they are all to stay to his wedding."

"And when is that to be?"

"In a week, I believe. But come, let us get an introduction to Miss Warner, and see what she can say for herself;" and they also approached and joined the group, thus leaving Ellen almost entirely alone.

But she did not notice it; she was too deeply absorbed in the workings of her own burning soul to be conscious of neglect. Her father, however, saw and felt it; beautiful as she *was*, witty and agreeable as she *could be*, she was sacrificing herself, and for one, too, who had now deserted her! This was a bitter pill for the proud man; and could Harry then have appeared and claimed her hand, he would almost gladly have given it, and thus have saved himself the mortification to which he was now subjected. Edwin Sanford's late manner to Ellen had also been a severe blow to him; for he had believed that no woman who had once been loved, and as passionately loved as she had been by Edwin, could ever entirely lose her influence over him. But this hope, too, had

been destroyed; for his engagement to Miss Warner, which was openly discussed and believed by all around him, seemed confirmed by the cold indifference of his greeting, as well as by the exclusive and devoted attentions which, for the remainder of the evening, he sedulously paid to the heiress.

Mr. Clifford was mortified and chagrined; but he was too much a man of the world to expose his feelings to the public gaze; and knowing that the report of Harry's engagement would soon be spread among his friends, and that many remarks would probably be made at Ellen's expense, he kept carefully near her, thus exciting her by his presence to renewed efforts at conversation and gaiety; for she read his imploring glance, and was too much accustomed to obey his slightest wish to neglect the appeal.

But the evening was a long and weary one; and as it drew to its close, Ellen seemed to feel it still more intolerable to be borne. She pined for the reckless indulgence of her feelings, for she knew not what she believed, or what she felt. Therefore, upon the very first opportunity that offered, she expressed her desire to return home; and Mr. Clifford assented, for he saw that it was necessary. Gently leading her, therefore, to the ladies' dressing-room, he turned to seek for Mary, whom hitherto he had entirely forgotten.

But his search for a long time proved fruitless, and he was beginning to be somewhat anxious, when, as a last resort, he looked into the music-room. A number of persons stood grouped about the door, and about the performers; a few apparently listening

to, and enjoying, the joint melody of the harp and piano, while the others were busily engaged in conversation, but in low, suppressed voices.

Looking around, Mr. Clifford was upon the point of turning disappointedly away, when he saw a figure partly hid in the recess of a window, which reminded him so much of Mary, that he at once advanced, and for a moment watched her unobservedly. She was standing perfectly motionless; her eyes cast down with such a mournful, sad expression of countenance, that it pained his heart to look upon her; while Frederick Harvey was speaking to her earnestly and rapidly, but in a grave and subdued tone.

"Mary!" said Mr. Clifford.

She started as a guilty being, while a blush suffused her cheek.

"Come, we are going," continued her father.

Silently she took his arm; and with a slight, almost unconscious bow to Frederick, who seemed rooted to the spot, she left the room.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVENTH.

"WHAT now?" asked Mr. Gray the next morning, as Frederick entered the room, rather more flurried than usual.

"Why I have done a very foolish thing," he answered, throwing himself into a chair.

"Repent, then, and be forgiven, as you ministers all say."

"I would, if it were of any use; but repentance will do no good here."

"How so? have you committed the unpardonable sin?"

"I verily believe I have," said Frederick; "for what can be worse than winning a girl's heart, without the slightest possibility of marrying her?"

"And why not marry her?" asked Mr. Gray.

"In the first place," returned Frederick, "her father never would consent; and in the second, I haven't the means."

"Why did you not think of all this before?"

"Think of it! I have thought of it so much, that no wonder I forgot it."

"How so?"

"Because I was off my guard, supposing it impossible; but after I had committed myself, I was of course in honor bound to go on."

"And what does Mary say?" asked Mr. Gray, never doubting for a moment who the lady was.

"Just what I supposed," said Frederick; "that her father never would consent."

"Why not?" asked Mr. Gray, impatiently; "what more can he wish? You are a clergyman, a gentleman, a ——"

"All that sounds very well," interrupted Frederick; "but Harry Selden had qualities as good as these, and others, too, which I have not."

"Such as what?"

"Why the prospect of success."

"Well, and haven't you the same?"

"No indeed; I might make out to live, but I never shall do more than that."

"Why, then, do you not act differently? You have talents and education enough, and might be the first preacher in the country, if you would but give up some of your foolish notions."

"Better be the heir of kingdoms above, than the possessor of a little wealth here," said Frederick.

"Bah!" said Mr. Gray, wheeling back his chair impatiently. "What business, then, have you to think of marrying?"

"None," said Frederick, taking up his hat and rising; "that is just what I started with."

"Where are you going now?" asked Mr. Gray.

"To Mr. Clifford."

"What for?"

"To tell him frankly what has passed.

"And be kicked for your pains!"

Frederick colored, and turned as if to leave the room.

"Come, come," said Mr. Gray; "sit down, and hear what I have to say."

"What is the use?" asked Frederick; "it all comes to the same thing at last."

"So you think; but I differ from you. Supposing Mr. Clifford consents, what will you do then?"

"Why, marry," said Frederick, smiling.

"And what then? How will you support your family?"

"I don't know," returned Frederick, shaking his head, "that is a problem that remains to be solved."

"Live upon love, I suppose," said Mr. Gray; "or faith, which?"

"*Both* are very agreeable resources," said Frederick, again laughing.

"But not very satisfactory to a parent," said Mr. Gray. "Come, I am going to act as mediator, and must know just what your prospects are."

"Love in a very, *very* small cottage," returned Frederick, now thoroughly amused at his position.

"You are incorrigible!" said Mr. Gray; "I expect I know your prospects as well, or even better, than you do yourself. So be off; and I'll go and see what can be done for both you and Harry."

"Harry, you know, is engaged, they say, to a southern girl."

"Nonsense! I don't believe one word of it," exclaimed Mr. Gray.

"But it is true, I fear," said Frederick; "for Edward Leslie told me that Harry confessed it to him with his own lips."

"It is something very recent, then," said Mr. Gray. "His last letter to me was full of Ellen."

"It is recent," replied Frederick. "They were engaged, I believe, just before Edward left."

"Well, I am sorry for it," said Mr. Gray; "I expected better things of him. Poor Ellen! I must go and see her; and if you take my advice, you will wait an hour or two before you call upon her father. I'll try and see him, too, in the meantime."

"Thank you," said Frederick; "every straw is of service to a drowning man, yet I fear it will be of no use;" and bidding Mr. Gray good morning, he turned once more to his mother's cottage.

Mrs. Harvey was looking from the parlor window, thinking probably of Frederick; for as he approached, she rose to open the door, and welcomed him with a mother's ready smile. But the thoughtful expression of his countenance did not escape her notice; and drawing a chair for him near to her own, she resumed her seat, saying, "What does Mr. Gray think?"

"I hardly know," said Frederick. "He was in a strange mood, and asked me so many questions, that I confess he has frightened me."

"Questions?" repeated Mrs. Harvey. "About what?"

"My prospects; and in truth, I don't see what I am to do."

"Trust in the Lord, and do good, and verily thou shalt be fed."

"But ought I to marry under such circumstances?"

"It is too late to think of that now," replied Mrs. Harvey; "and perhaps you may not have the opportunity. I think it almost certain that Mr. Clifford will refuse his consent."

This seemed poor comfort to Frederick, who, sud-

denly rising, walked rapidly up and down the room; while his mother took up her knitting, as was her wont when deeply interested; it assisted in calming her nerves. She now waited in silence the workings of his mind. It was her habit to do so; and to this, probably, she owed much of the influence she exerted over him.

"Mother," he at length said, resuming his seat, "How many errors are taught in the church, and to how much unnecessary trouble and anxiety they lead! Religion is such a solace and delight! and yet what an enemy to one's happiness it might be made."

"In what way?" asked his mother.

"By a misunderstanding of the *spirit* of the Bible. It pains me to hear a minister preach of the constant warfare which is necessary between the spirit and the flesh. It is by such assertions as this that they destroy the spiritual enjoyments of numbers of Christians."

"How so?" asked Mrs. Harvey.

"By filling their minds with terror, whenever they give way to the natural emotions of their hearts, which, as human beings, they are privileged to do."

"And is the flesh never at war with the spirit?"

"Yes, but not necessarily so."

Mrs. Harvey looked up anxiously for a moment. Frederick frequently startled her by such assertions; but as he usually worked out his statements to her satisfaction, she merely said, "Explain yourself; how is it to be avoided?"

"By a proper understanding of ourselves and the purposes of life," replied Frederick. "God did not

create us with faculties for enjoyment, without intending that we should use them. Neither did he place us in a beautiful world merely as a temptation, against which we are constantly to struggle. I believe he intended us to look upon the bright side of every thing, and be as happy as possible."

"And what is to become of the poor, the oppressed and the afflicted, while we are thus pursuing our own gratifications?" asked Mrs. Harvey.

"It should be among our pleasures to comfort and help them," said Frederick; "making them happy need not make us miserable; and I confess it is a very difficult matter for me to believe that any one can be a Christian who is not happy. We all have something to enjoy; and if the soul is at peace with its Maker, it will easily find it, were it only in the pure breath of Heaven, the beautiful glad sunshine, the green fields, and the other countless offerings of Nature; and most of us have additional sources of enjoyment within our reach, which, I believe, it is base ingratitude not to accept and recognize. Men live too much in the negative; what they *have not* is the burden of their song, instead of what they have; and this is another mistake of ministers; while they preach that Prayer is the "Christian's vital breath," they say too little of *Praise*. Now I think it by far the more ennobling, as well as the more acceptable form of worship."

"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation," repeated Mrs. Harvey.

"Certainly; pray, and pray without ceasing, if you please; it is a Christian's privilege; but do not allow it to take the place of praise. I think this omission

is at present one of the greatest *wants* of the Church, giving a sanctimonious, sad aspect to every thing connected with it, instead of the rapturous, exulting glow of souls that are full of song. I never meet a minister with a long face, but I want to turn the corner of the street. He is doing more harm to the cause than he can ever undo."

"It is the expression of these opinions," said Mrs. Harvey, "I suspect, that prevents your success."

"Success does not consist in getting a church," returned Frederick, "but in doing good. Preaching is not the ministry of Christ, but only one of its forms, and one that I am by no means anxious about. It leads to so much littleness, so much selfishness and envy. Very, *very* few escape these shoals."

"What, then, will you do?" asked Mrs. Harvey,

"Whatever my hand findeth to do; lecture, write, preach, and teach, as I have opportunity; and when I have none, I shall be most happy to read and study, and prepare for a future hour."

"These will scarcely bring you a competency."

"It will bring happiness, though; and money is only valuable as a *means* to this end; so I shall be as well off, and better, too, than most others."

"Does Mary agree with you in these views?"

"It was the consideration of her that led me to these reflections," said Frederick; "uncle George's remarks, and the effects of education combined, clouded my thoughts for the moment, and I was bringing up all kinds of arguments against our marriage, seeing a thousand reasons why it would be foolish, and why it would be wrong, and why I should devote myself more to my calling, &c., &c., when the light

once more burst upon me, and I felt the folly of such conduct. She loves me, and I love her, and there is a God above us both; if we cannot sustain our bodily existence, we certainly shall our spiritual. All I ask is, 'bread for to-day;' I have hope enough for to-morrow. But it is time," he exclaimed, starting up, "that I heard my doom."

"You have my best wishes," said his mother, as he stooped for her parting kiss.

And prayer, too, she might have added; for her heart rose in fervent supplications that all things might work together for his good, both here and hereafter. The footstool of her Maker was her dwelling-place; for, with woman's natural weakness and dependence, she had placed her entire trust upon the promises of her Heavenly Father, "who giveth to his children all things, whatsoever they may ask of him."

Thus she could not sympathize with Frederick's more manly ideas of communion, but her strong and cultivated sense caused her to make the allowance due to the difference of sex, of age, and of experience; and although she trembled oftentimes at his fearless questionings of authority and belief, she yet knew that while his heart was pure, his very doubts and differences would eventually lead him to a clearer perception of the truth. "There is a growth," she would argue, "derived from observation and from time, in all other things; why not, then, in the understanding of the Scriptures?" And thus she comforted herself, and strengthened her hope for his continued welfare; and she had need of comfort,

for the future, without the light of faith, presented but a dark and gloomy picture.

The little property that had been left by her husband was now nearly spent; for her only care had been to make it last until Frederick should complete his studies. *Then*, she had no doubt, her troubles would be ended. But far different was the fact. A full year had he now been preaching to city and to country congregations; and yet, although all admired him, and thought his sermons not only beautiful but practical, not only elevating but heart-searching; still, because he did not, and would not preach dry, barren, doctrinal discourses, made up of election, justification, &c., &c., but presented in their place the inestimable love of the Savior, and the beauty of a holy life, the old and the wise shook their heads, with an accompanying "*but*," which seemed to say, "He is not fitted for *us*, he will do better elsewhere;" and many prayers and supplications to her God, had been necessary to strengthen the widow's heart, and to fix her eye steadfastly upon that Rock which can never be shaken.

CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHTH.

Upon the departure of Frederick, Mr. Gray had immediately ordered his carriage, and proceeded to Mr. Clifford's. He did not ask for Ellen, however, as he had intended; for, meeting her father at the door, he was necessarily compelled to make him the first visit. This proved a much longer one than he had anticipated, and a far more exciting; for high words passed between them, so that Mary, who had unconsciously approached and opened the door, was startled at the anger depicted upon the countenance of her father, who, standing before Mr. Gray, she heard accusing him of fraud and deceit.

"You have deceived me, sir," were the words he was uttering; but so excited were his feelings, that Mary closed the door unperceived by him, and hastening to her chamber, threw herself, pale and trembling, upon a chair. It was some moments before she could speak; but as soon as she was able, she related to Ellen all that she had seen and heard.

"What more did you expect?" said Ellen, bitterly. "He has sacrificed me, and he will you."

"I knew that," said Mary, "and was prepared for his refusal, but not for such anger; and what has Uncle George to do with it?"

"He probably came to conciliate him, and plead for Frederick."

"It did no good in Harry's case," returned Mary.

Ellen's lip trembled with emotion. But just at that moment the parlor-door opened, and the girls listened in breathless silence, to catch even but one word; for it seemed to both, as if their future happiness depended upon that interview.

It was Mr. Gray taking his leave. Just, however, as he was descending the steps, Mr. Clifford approached him, saying, "Perhaps we might compromise the matter?"

Mr. Gray hesitated. He was evidently hurt, deeply hurt; but after pausing a moment, he turned and followed Mr. Clifford, who entered the parlor, closed the door, and this time locked it. After a short time, however, he reappeared; and calling for pen, ink, and paper, said, "I must understand our position better than I have hitherto done."

Mr. Gray, who seemed much fatigued, and was leaning his forehead upon the head of his cane, slowly lifted it, and gazing intently upon Mr. Clifford, who was watching impatiently the return of the servant, said, "Is it possible that the love of money could so have changed you?"

The color rose to Mr. Clifford's pale cheek, as he answered—

"The love of money? No; the love of my children."

"How little you know yourself!" said Mr. Gray.

Mr. Clifford bit his lip, and then answered, as if to throw back the imputation, "And who would have expected such a course from you?"

Mr. Gray made no reply; for the entrance of the servant with the needed implements prevented him.

Taking the pen, he now wrote as rapidly as his feebleness would permit; but he had scarcely recovered sufficiently from his illness not to be exhausted at so prolonged an interview. It was some time, therefore, before he completed the paper which he was writing, which seemed to require some thought and care. At length, however, it was finished; and after being carefully read by Mr. Clifford, was finally copied and signed by him—Mr. Gray placing one in his own pocket, while Mr. Clifford retained the other.

"Good morning," said Mr. Gray, now rising; while Mr. Clifford, advancing to the door, called for his carriage, and stood upon the steps awaiting his departure, when, with cold and formal bows, they parted — they who had been friends in their youth and in their manhood.

Dinner was now announced, and the girls, hastening to be at the table before their father, had just taken their seats, as the door-bell rang.

Mary started. She was so foolish that morning; every thing frightened her.

"It is Mr. Harvey, called upon *you*, sir," she now heard the servant say.

"Tell him we are at dinner," answered her father, entering the room, and then looking back, added, "I will see him an hour hence."

How quick Mary's heart was beating! how much she took upon her plate! and how little did she eat! Ellen, too, was strangely forgetful of every body and of every thing, while Mr. Clifford scolded first about the dinner, then about the dessert, and drank glass after glass. He was evidently excited, strangely so,

for the girls could not determine whether it were pleasurable or painful; for one moment he would look pleased and amused, and the next disappointment and anger would overspread his face. They were glad, very glad, when the dinner ended, and they could once more retire to their rooms.

"What do you think?" asked Mary.

"I don't know," said Ellen; "but they could hardly have been talking of you and Frederick, or he would not have sent him the message he did; for if he was angry he would not have told him to call again, and if he were pleased—" she smiled as she said this; she knew there was no hope of that, but only said it to comfort Mary, "he would have seen him at once. It must have been private business they were engaged upon."

"I hope uncle George is in no trouble about money matters," said Mary, whose gentle heart could even then feel for the sorrows of others.

"There is Frederick, now!" exclaimed Ellen, as she approached the window. "He looks as bold as a lion."

And so he was; all fear had left him; for although he was almost sure of a refusal, his heart was young and hopeful. Mary loved him, and time could work wonders; "besides, whatever is, is best," he thought, as he now followed the servant to the library, where Mr. Clifford awaited him. A young man is apt to feel awkwardly at such a time; and Frederick for a moment seemed almost too choked for utterance. But by the time he had taken his seat his wonted courage returned, and he immediately opened the conversation by saying—

"You have surmised the purpose of my visit, I presume, sir?"

"Explain yourself," said Mr. Clifford

"After the interview you were a witness of last evening between Mary and myself, I supposed you would have no doubt of my errand."

Mr. Clifford merely bowed, as if waiting some further communication; and Frederick, after hesitating for an instant, continued somewhat haughtily:

"Have we your sanction for our union?"

"With what prospects?" asked Mr. Clifford, stiffly.

"The usual prospects of a gentleman and a clergyman," said Frederick.

"And think you that they would satisfy a daughter of mine?"

"They should do so," answered Frederick, proudly.

"Well, sir, they do not satisfy me," returned Mr. Clifford.

"I did not suppose they would," said Frederick, dryly.

"Why, then, have you made the proposal?"

"I thought it barely possible that the sacrifice of one daughter's happiness, might have changed your opinions."

The color rose to Mr. Clifford's pale brow. He was evidently piqued, and also angry; but some powerful consideration appeared to control him, and he answered, "You have taunted me, as others have done, with Ellen's unhappiness. It is her own fault, not mine. But be that as it may, I shall interfere no more about my children. Mary can choose for herself; but remember, sir, not one penny shall I give

her. She has my consent to marry you, but nothing more."

Mr. Clifford, who had gradually worked himself into something like heroic self-sacrifice, now rising, rang the bell; and ordered the servant who appeared to tell Miss Mary he desired her presence.

Frederick listened in surprise; but not greater than Mary felt when she received the summons.

"What can it mean?" she asked of Ellen.

"Everything or nothing," answered Ellen, almost as much agitated as Mary; for it seemed as if her own destiny hung upon the decision. "Be bold," she whispered, as she accompanied her to the door; and kissing her cheek, she ran back to her room, where she waited in anxious suspense the conclusion of the scene.

As Mary entered the library, Frederick rose and placed a chair for her; and standing by its side, he said, leaning slightly over her, "Our happiness is in your hands, it seems."

"Happiness!" exclaimed Mr. Clifford. "You all talk about happiness as a thing of reality. Mary, Mr. Harvey offers you," he sneeringly continued, "his hand, and his profession. Will they satisfy you?"

"You have omitted the heart," said Frederick, "which is the only gift worth offering; and that," he said, turning to Mary, "will be yours, truly and devotedly, to the end of life."

"Speak," said Mr. Clifford, as Mary, looking upon the ground, seemed scarcely able to raise her head. "If you marry him, remember *he* supports you, not I. Not one penny shall I give you."

Mary now looked up enquiringly at Frederick. She was taken so entirely by surprise, that she knew not what to say.

"I have but little to offer you," he answered; "but that little can make us happy, I believe, if we have contented hearts."

Mary smiled, and turned towards her father as if to speak. But he did not await her reply; for he evidently was well satisfied with her visible determination, although he had desired to make the terms of his consent as hard as possible.

"Remember it is your own choice," he now said, as he arose and left the room.

Much had Frederick and Mary now to talk about. They wondered again and again at Mr. Clifford's consent, it was so unexpected to them both! and of his unusual behavior, for his actions seemed strangely at variance with his words. Then Frederick mentioned the smallness of his income, and apologised for offering such a pittance for her acceptance; saying how unintentionally he had been hurried into a declaration of his attachment, and how fearful he was of securing her happiness; for he now really doubted if it were possible. Then she whispered something that seemed to please him; for he pressed her to his heart, and told her that her words were beyond all wealth. And then Mary suddenly remembered Ellen; and, ever forgetful of herself, bid Frederick a hasty adieu, and sought her eagerly.

"Tell me all," said Ellen, in a stifled tone. Mary proceeded to relate all that had occurred, both to her, and to Frederick, previous to her appearance. And Ellen listened in silence; and when Mary had

finished, clasped her hands upon her breast, as if to stifle the beatings of her heart.

"Interfere no more with his children! Did he say that?" she at length gasped forth.

"Yes," said Mary, much surprised at her emotion. For what could it be to Ellen, now that Harry was engaged to another? The same thought seemed to flash upon Ellen's mind; for her bosom heaved convulsively, and throwing herself into Mary's arms, she sobbed violently.

"Too late! too late for *me!*" she murmured.

CHAPTER TWENTY-NINTH.

"I AM sorry to leave you," said Mary that evening, as she turned from the glass where she had been placing the finishing touches to her dress.

"I shall be better soon," said Ellen, tears filling her eyes as she spoke. And as Mary left the room, she closed the door after her, and putting out the light, drew her shawl closely about her, for the evenings were growing cool again; and drawing a large chair to the window, she seated herself where a flood of moonlight streamed in upon her. She had always been fond of the moonlight, and it seemed to visit her now as a friend and comforter. She felt saddened but not unhappy by its influence; and was gradually becoming so deeply absorbed in the fond memories

it excited, that the violent throbbings of her temples were almost forgotten, when a knock at the door brought back her wandering thoughts. "Come in," she said, but without moving; she was too indifferent to care who it was.

"Mary tells me you are suffering with a headache," said her father, as he now leaned over her and placed his hand upon her burning brow. He did not know how much his presence had increased the pain. "I am sorry," he continued: "it would have been better for you to have gone to the party."

"Better! why?" asked Ellen.

"Because every one who has heard of Harry Selden's engagement will consider your headache a mere feint to hide your disappointment," returned her father, who, knowing her pride, had determined to excite it, as a means of rousing her to action.

"They would think very wrong, then," said Ellen; "I would *hide* nothing. But now that you speak of Harry, what advantages has Frederick over him?"

"None that I know of," answered her father, willing to soothe her.

"Why, then, have you consented to Mary's engagement?"

"Because I have seen the evil of a refusal."

"Is it true, then," said Ellen, looking eagerly np, "that you will interfere no longer between us?"

"Yes," answered her father, who knew that the easiest way to conciliate her was by a show of generosity, "I regret the past; and were Harry here, would willingly consent to your union."

Tears once more burst from Ellen's eyes, as she threw her arms about his neck; while Mr. Clifford's

conscience smote him, for he had not weighed his words, and hardly meant what he had said. "But," he thought, "what does it matter? I shall never be called upon to redeem them;" and as if to reassure himself, he added, "don't weep, my child, Harry is not worthy of you."

"He is," said Ellen; "I do not believe in his engagement."

"Do you forget what Mr. Leslie told you?" asked her father, "that he heard it from Harry's own lips?"

Ellen had again fallen back upon her seat; and clasping her temples with her hands, said beseechingly, "leave me, leave me;" and Mr. Clifford turned disappointedly away. He had probed the wound in order to heal it; but he had gone too far; for in giving his consent he had excited her fondest hopes.

The next morning Ellen bore the traces of her recent suffering. She was pale and haggard, her eyes were heavy, and her step languid. It seemed impossible for her to throw off the weight that had apparently settled upon her heart, and yet she still denied her belief in Harry's engagement both to Mr. Gray and to Mary.

"Why, then," asked Mary, "are you so much affected by the report?"

"It is woman's nature," she answered; "reason and experience tell me that it is untrue. Harry never would desert me so; and yet my heart *will not* be comforted."

And thus she passed the few days previous to Frank's wedding, her very sympathy for Mary's happiness filling her eyes with tears, and her heart with sighs. "Why was she, too, not happy?" So

that Mr. Clifford himself began really to feel the contrition he had so carelessly expressed. His whole affections seemed once more centering upon her; for, strange to say, while he seemed to feel Mary's engagement a relief to him, but as a matter in which he had no concern, he had gradually lost much of the interest he had lately shown in Frank and his affairs; so that when the day arrived to which he had looked forward with so much pride and satisfaction, it found him depressed and anxious. He dreaded the evening for Ellen's sake, for she must necessarily be present, and he knew that all eyes would be turned upon her.

While he was thus anticipating a renewal of his past mortification and chagrin, Ellen appeared ready to accompany him, so radiant in her beauty, so simple and unadorned in her dress, that his parental pride was satisfied, and he felt that none could gaze upon her but with looks of admiration and respect.

Mary had already gone, for she was to stand as bridesmaid to Susan, and with Frederick!

Ellen had also been invited, but had declined, thus tacitly declaring her continued engagement to Harry; a circumstance that would render her still more conspicuous, her father feared, as it publicly expressed her attachment to him, while he now had as publicly deserted her. But of all this Ellen thought nothing, and cared nothing; she seemed to have settled into a torpid lethargy, from which nothing could arouse her.

As she entered the drawing-room at Mrs. Gray's, where the marriage ceremony was to be performed, the lights seemed too brilliant for her; and the whole

scene displayed was in such contrast with her mourning heart, that she instinctively paused as if to retrace her steps, when her father whispered, "Rouse yourself! don't let the world laugh at you!" The world! she had suffered too intensely to have thought of its opinion. But as she now cast her eyes around, and met mingled looks of sympathy, of pity, and of keen scrutiny, her pride was roused. Their probable surmises and remarks flashed upon her mind, and she determined to disappoint their expectations. Her late listlessness was thus suddenly overcome, and a powerful reaction was the consequence; and as her father looked upon her erect form and sparkling eye, he felt that his arrow had reached its mark. She would now *command* the attention which was her due.

At this moment they encountered William Chauncey, who seemed wandering about in much perplexity.

"I am in search," he said, "of a bridesmaid; for Miss Warner is not well enough to act, although she hopes to be present during a part of the evening."

"*I* will take her place," said Ellen, glancing at her father, whose face expressed his satisfaction.

William Chauncey seemed surprised; but offering his arm, with many thanks led her from the room.

"Edwin Sanford will have no reason to regret the exchange," he said.

"Edwin Sanford!" exclaimed Ellen. She had not thought of who she was to stand with! But it was too late to retract; for as they now entered the apartment where William had been anxiously awaited, he exclaimed, "A prize! a prize!"

Ellen smiled; and walking up to Edwin, who stood somewhat apart from the others, as they gathered quickly around her, she said, in a friendly, natural tone, "*I* will supply Miss Warner's place, if agreeable to you."

Edwin bowed his acknowledgment. He was too much surprised to speak; and his heart beat strangely at her words. He, too, had heard of Harry's engagement. "Could she have relented," he thought, "of her former treatment of me, and taken this mode of confessing it?" He was proud and haughty; and could he have had time for thought and for revenge, would have scorned the idea of reconciliation. But the very suddenness of the offer, and her surpassing loveliness, overcame his resentment; and in a moment he had forgotten everything but her presence and her words.

"We have changed the order of arrangements," said Mary Chauncey, who, with the other bridesmaids, had been busily whispering while Ellen addressed herself to Edwin. "It will never do for any of us to precede Ellen; she must take the lead, and enter the room first."

Ellen, who would really have preferred a less conspicuous place, feeling somewhat frightened at the step she had already taken, made much objection to this, but was at length overruled, and compelled to take the precedence; which her commanding figure, and noble bearing, made almost necessary.

A slight flush had spread over Edwin's face, when the proposition had first been made; for it proved Ellen's marked superiority over Miss Warner, to whom a much inferior position had been allotted;

and to whom, too, he had in reality been paying his addresses, a fact which he was now ashamed to acknowledge, even to himself. But he was quickly reconciled to the change, when he heard the whispered remarks which followed their entrance. "What a handsome couple they would make," said one. "They seem made for each other," said a second. "You see if it isn't a match," said a third. And as he joined her in the dance, and dwelt upon the sweet tones of her silvery voice, his former passion revived with redoubled force, and he once more became her devoted lover.

Many times during the evening did Ellen's heart misgive her; but she stifled its whisperings. A glance at the delighted, proud expression of her father's face combined with her old spirit of conquest to impel her on; and she indulged freely in the caprices of her excited spirits, and was so beautiful and fascinating, that all felt an irresistible attraction towards her. Even Edward Leslie bowed in renewed admiration, although he felt that he was treading upon dangerous ground.

"You are a fool for your pains," said William Chauncey, after endeavoring, but in vain, to draw him from her.

"I know it," he replied; "but to save me, I can't help dangling about her."

Miss Warner did not arrive until late in the evening, and was much chagrined when she did appear to find herself such a cipher in the assembly of which she had expected to shine as the "bright particular star." For although no one exactly neglected her, and Edwin did his best to be polite, enquiring care-

fully of her health, &c., she felt, with the quick sensitiveness of woman, that her reign was at an end.

Ellen's triumph was complete! and when upon her return home, her father clasped her in his arms, saying, "that he had now indeed recovered his long-lost child," she tried to be happy; but her heart, loosed from its moorings, was tempest tossed; and as she laid her head upon her pillow, tears unbidden filled her eyes. But the sleep to which she had long been a stranger now prevented the thought and reflection which might have saved her so much after-suffering, and she gently sank to rest.

CHAPTER THIRTIETH.

"WHAT shall I do?" asked Mary, when, the next morning after breakfast, her mother and herself entered Ellen's chamber; "she is still asleep; would you wake her?"

Mrs. Clifford did not answer immediately, for she was leaning over the pale sleeper, watching the troubled expression of her countenance. At length she said, "No, let her sleep until the last moment; I will have a nice breakfast, such as she likes, prepared and brought to her."

"And I will dress at once, so as to help her when she does awake," said Mary.

The wedding dinner was to be given at Mr. Gray's that day; and he had begged that it might be an early one, for he grew weary as the day advanced. So the bridal party had agreed to meet quite early at Susan's mother's, and go from thence in company. This it was that made Mary so anxious about Ellen's late sleep. She now hastily dressed, and then proceeded to arrange every thing for Ellen's use which she supposed she might have occasion for. Even the hat, veil, and gloves, were thought of, and had just been placed in a convenient spot, when Ellen started from her pillow.

"All dressed!" she exclaimed, looking at Mary in great astonishment.

"Yes; it is almost time we were going."

"Going! where?" asked Ellen.

"To Susan's, and then to uncle George's."

Ellen clasped her hands together; she had forgotten the dinner. But it now flashed upon her, and with its long train of consequences. Oh! how she regretted that first unfortunate move which now compelled her, as a bridesmaid, to join in all the festivities consequent upon the wedding! How easy it is to err; but how very difficult to retrace our wandering steps!

Ellen's breakfast was now brought in, and she was again deprived of the indulgence of that healthful train of thought which she so much needed. For although she ate but little, it caused confusion and bustle; then, too, she must dress. But before she was half prepared, the door-bell told of visitors. It was Frederick, who had "called for Mary;" and

now another ring, and Edwin entered to "wait upon Ellen."

Excited by the haste she was thus obliged to make, Ellen had somewhat recovered from her waking fright when she appeared; and although she had secretly determined to be cold and reserved, and tried to be so, Edwin did not perceive it; and when they arrived at Susan's, and joined the gay group assembled there, her old love of display again took possession of her, and recklessly she gave way to the excitement of the season; so that Mr. Gray, when he met her, was astonished to see her laughing eye and dimpled cheek. It was a vision of past years, and involuntarily he turned to receive the glad greetings of Harry Selden. But the face of Edwin Sanford dispelled the illusion, and disappointedly he turned away.

"Ellen is very much excited," he said to Mary. "What does it mean?"

"I do not know," she answered; "it hardly seems natural; perhaps she does not wish her feelings for Harry suspected."

Mr. Gray shook his head, saying, "he did not like it;" while Frank "admired her spirit," and told her so. But her heart was troubled; for she saw that Edwin hung upon her words, and lived, as it were, but in her smiles; and painfully she foreboded the evil that was in store for her, and pined for her former security and ease. Alas! poor Ellen! the card once played can never be recalled!

"Ellen," said Mary, as returning from her happy ride with Frederick, she found Ellen upon the bed,

with both hands pressed upon her burning brow; "you are not well, are you?"

"No," said Ellen, in a choking voice.

"Why, then, do you appear at the party to-night?"

"How can I help it?" asked Ellen. "It is at our own house, and every one would notice my absence, and talk about it; besides, I must undo the work I have done;" and springing from her bed, she was quickly employed upon her preparations for the evening. But while she did so, Mary saw that her thoughts, too, were at work; she had evidently determined upon some great effort, and was nerving herself to its performance.

And she was right. Edwin's manner during the day, and particularly upon their ride home, had left no doubt upon Ellen's mind as to his purpose; and she felt that any further acceptance of his attentions would be highly dishonorable, as well as dangerous. Hitherto she had acted foolishly, giving way to a flow of spirits which seemed beyond her control; but with no intention to deceive, and no definite thought of the consequences. But now her eyes were opened. Bitterly she repented of her folly, and determined at once, and at all hazards, to check his mad pursuit. But how was this to be accomplished without offending him? For she could not but acknowledge that she had given him cause for complaint, however thoughtlessly; and this was the question still revolving in her mind as she welcomed, with forced smiles, the arriving guests.

Edwin was among the earliest; and Ellen's heart almost stopped its beating as she saw him advancing towards her, for no way of action had presented

itself, and she feared lest the excitement which she had hitherto been unable to resist, would once more lead her into error. But she was relieved for a time, for he was detained in his progress; while at the same moment Edward Leslie approached, and after a few words, asked the honor of her hand in the second dance. "The first, I suppose, according to etiquette, is to be enjoyed by Mr. Sanford."

"No," said Ellen, catching eagerly at the idea which now suggested itself; "I think it quite time the groomsman's privileges should cease; so I will set the example, and lead the first dance with you, if you are not engaged."

Edward thanked her; and, pleased at this unlooked-for compliment, talked so much more agreeably than usual, that Ellen began to think that he was not, after all, *quite* so weak as she had at first supposed.

But the music now summoned to the dance; and she turned smilingly to accept Edward's extended hand, when Edwin Sanford stepped up to her. It was the first opportunity he had had of speaking to her, and he was already a little out of humor.

"Excuse me, Mr. Leslie," he said; "but the pleasure of the first dance with Miss Clifford is mine, I believe."

"Indeed!" said Ellen, coldly. "I have never liked these wedding ceremonies; and as Mr. Leslie was left out of the dinner party to-day, it is but fair that he should receive additional honors to-night;" saying which, she bowed coldly to Edwin, and proceeded to join the dance with Edward for a partner.

Edwin Sanford was electrified, but only for a

moment. A bitter smile curled his lips as he muttered between his closed teeth, "No, you'll not play *that* game again with me;" and turning, he followed to the dancing-room, where Ellen, who had congratulated herself upon the opportunity that had thus arisen not only to forward, but, as she supposed, at once to accomplish her design, was much surprised to see him, and still more so when he advanced to join her when the dance was ended.

Edwin was determined *not* to be angry, at least not to appear so, and *not* to be repulsed; therefore, although Ellen sedulously allowed no opportunity to escape for either slight or rebuff, he still returned with unabated ardor to the pursuit; and she at length read, tremulously, his visible determination. The more she avoided him, the more he attended her, until the compunctions which she had at first really felt gave way to the indignation his behavior excited; and she now became so intent upon gaining her point, and showing him her equal determination of spirit, that she entirely overlooked the construction that might be put upon the interest she evinced in the conversation and attentions of Mr. Leslie, who, elated beyond measure, flattered himself that there was indeed hope for him!

He had received that very morning a summons from Baton Rouge to return, as his presence there was much needed, and had accordingly made every arrangement for doing so the next day. But the excitement of the scene had entirely driven it from his mind, until near the close of the evening, when, suddenly remembering it, he exclaimed —

"Really, Miss Clifford, you have made me entirely forget my departure to-morrow."

"To-morrow!" said Ellen, as a sudden paleness overspread her cheek.

"Yes, I *had* intended to return to Baton Rouge; but not, if you desire my stay," he added, his heart fluttering with hope.

Ellen did not answer, nor did she appear to have heard the almost whispered conclusion of his speech, for her paleness rapidly increased; so that Edward rejoiced to see the approach of her father, by whom she was borne fainting to her room.

"Return to Baton Rouge! and what report can he bear of me to Harry?" was the thought that burned in her brain, as she tossed feverishly upon her bed that night, giving utterance to sobs which told of an almost bursting heart.

It was a long and fearful night; but towards morning she sank into a gentle slumber, from which she was, however, suddenly wakened by a knock upon her door. Mary, who had been a silent watcher at Ellen's side, hastened to prevent its repetition, when the servant called out that he "had a note for Miss Ellen, which required an answer."

"Give it to me," said Ellen, now thoroughly aroused. Quickly she broke the seal; but as her eye ran rapidly over the contents, the bright flush once more rose to her cheek. "I am doomed," she said in an accent of despair, throwing herself back upon her pillow.

"What is the matter?" asked Mary.

"Read and see," she answered, throwing her the note.

Mary, as she took it, glanced first at the signature, and was surprised to see "Edward Leslie;" but she said nothing, and turned to the contents, which were as follows:

"Miss Clifford will perhaps excuse the presumption of this note when she recalls the events of the last evening, which have awakened in me the most joyous hopes! Can I believe that the mere thought of my departure could have excited such emotion in your breast? You have but to speak the word, and I remain here forever. Your most obedient and devoted servant,

EDWARD LESLIE.

"When was he to go?" asked Mary.

"This morning," said Ellen.

"And do you wish him to stay?"

"Stay!" exclaimed Ellen; "I had forgotten his very existence! Oh! I have done wrong, very wrong!" she added, wringing her hands.

"In what way?" asked Mary.

"By my thoughtlessness. I was so anxious to vex Mr. Sanford, that I never once thought of Mr. Leslie. Who would ever have supposed *him* a suitor, and to *me?*"

"Well, no matter," said Mary, who was sorry to see Ellen's renewed excitement, which was so unlike her usually composed and quiet manner; "he must receive an answer, I suppose."

"What can I say?" said Ellen. "I have certainly been to blame."

"Tell him so, but that it was unintentional," said Mary.

"I am not fit to do it," said Ellen. "I am almost beside myself."

"Let me write for you," returned Mary. "I will merely say that you are quite sick this morning, in consequence of your fatigue during the last week, which was also the cause of your fainting last night, and therefore cannot reply to his note; but that you send your respects, and hope that he will have a pleasant journey."

"Thank you! thank you! that's a kind, good sister!" said Ellen, throwing her arms around Mary's neck, and kissing her. "There is my desk, with everything in it."

Mary seated herself, and soon wrote and sent the note which was to destroy such fond anticipations.

CHAPTER THIRTY-FIRST.

It was with eager steps and quickened pulses, that Harry Selden sought Mr. Leslie's room upon his return to Baton Rouge. But he found him disappointed and dispirited, and in no mood to speak favorably of any one; and when he finally questioned him of Ellen, he was answered shortly and sharply:

"You are well rid of her, I can tell you. I guess Edwin Sanford will find he has enough to do to keep her in check. The most consummate flirt I ever met!"

"Who?" asked Harry, in astonishment.

"Why Ellen Clifford, to be sure. She thinks no more of one's heart-strings, than of so much twine."

"How?" said Harry, who now began to have some glimmering of the truth. "Whose heart-strings has she been playing upon?"

"Everybody's in turn," said Edward, "but Edwin Sanford's in particular. He deserves some punishment, however, for he was partly engaged to Miss Warner, and has treated her most shamefully; and, by the way, your brother Charles bids fair to carry her off, fortune and all!"

"Indeed!" said Harry; "and what becomes of Edwin?"

"That's a question. Some say Ellen will marry him; and it will be a shame if she doesn't, now that she has led him on so far. But *I* don't believe she has heart enough to marry anybody."

Harry was mute with astonishment. "It is time for me to return," he thought; "she may possibly be driven to this course by her father." Not for a moment did he suspect her of inconstancy; but his heart was troubled; and when, that evening, Blanche rallied him upon his low spirits, he tried in vain to rouse himself.

A great change had come over Blanche since that memorable pic-nic. She now no longer attempted to bend Harry to her will, or chain him to her side, by either smiles or tears, for she had seen the folly of such a course; and all were astonished at the increased staidness of her manners and conversation. Not that she had lost any of her charming vivacity; but it was now tempered by a depth of feeling that was

before unknown to her. The judge smiled, and said, "it was a new evidence of her attachment to Harry." But Mrs. Lincoln looked grave; she was pleased, to be sure, at such visible improvement, but "she hoped Blanche would not be disappointed;" while Harry was insensibly attracted towards her. Her noble but misused traits won his brotherly affection; and it became his amusement and delight to point out to her new methods of advancement, all of which she caught eagerly at, for she was full of enthusiasm, and ever ready for the *something new*, and did *well* all that she attempted. But it was only by starts; her great fault being, as Harry perpetually told her, a want of perseverance; but even of this she began to give some indications.

"Come," she now said, gaily, "I am not going to give up so easily. I shall show my perseverance for once in my life, by making you confess yourself in the very best of spirits."

"And how will you accomplish this?"

"That is just what I have been considering. In the first place, I suppose, as you told me the other day when I had an awful fit of the blues, which you tried to scold me out of, I must try and get the mind interested about something, no matter what; and insensibly the cloud will lift, and the bright sun shine again, lighting up everything about us."

"You have a good memory," said Harry, laughing.

"Bravo!" cried Blanche, "one laugh already! That's a good beginning; and here is the daily journal, which might help a little. You haven't read it, have you?"

"Yes," said Harry, "you'll find nothing there; it is pre-eminently stupid to-day."

"That's a shame! hasn't Mr. Leslie returned?"

"Yes, but not in time to write any thing."

"At any rate, he always superintends the selected quotations; so there may be something there to wake us up;" and Blanche turned the paper over, and seated herself nearer the light with an air of mock gravity, and read the following:

"Earth is an island, parted round with fears;
Thy way to heaven is through a sea of tears;
It is a stormy passage, where is found
The wreck of many a ship, but no man drowned."

"Deliver me, then, from trying it!" she cried.

Her hearers all smiled, which observing, Blanche nodded her head expressively, as much as to say, "That's pretty well; I shall succeed at last," and then continued:

"Breaking hearts
Require——"

"Horrible! what upon earth does any one want with such disagreeables? I'll not read that. Here's Scott:

"A foot more light, a step more true,
Ne'er from the heath-flower dashed the dew;
E'en the slight hare-bell raised his head
Elastic from her fairy tread."

"Who does that describe?" asked Harry.

"Me, I suppose you mean," said Blanche, carelessly. "And here is something about ambition, that will do for you:

"Ambition is like love, impatient
Both of delays and rivals."

"And what is a poor fellow to do who is afflicted with both evils at the same time?" said Harry.

"What is that?" exclaimed the judge; "quite an admission, I should think."

And so Harry appeared to feel it; for his face suddenly flushed to crimson. He had evidently spoken without thought.

"What, blushing!" said the judge; "and Blanche, too! Why what is the matter now?" he asked, as Blanche, throwing down the paper, ran out upon the verandah. "Now is your time," he continued, turning to Harry, who, he supposed, needed encouragement; "you have my full consent."

But Harry showed no signs of following her. Pale and almost horror-stricken, he leaned against the mantle for support; for the truth now flashed upon him. Blanche loved him! or thought she did! Harry, however, knew her too well to think it would be lasting; and had she alone been concerned, he could quickly have dispelled the illusion. But the judge—the judge who had been so kind, so fatherly in his affections towards him—*he* had evidently built his hopes upon it, and would now think, perhaps, that he had intentionally deceived him! This was the poisoned shaft, and Harry recoiled from its wound. How could he explain himself so as to be understood and believed?

"Are you ill?" asked the judge, frightened at his continued paleness.

But before Harry could reply, Edward Leslie entered the room; and walking hastily to Harry, placed a letter in his hand, saying, "I fear there is bad news for you; your brother Charles enclosed

this in an envelope to me, and begged I would immediately bring it to you."

Harry's eye ran quickly over the contents. His sister Emma, the one of all his family whom he most wished to see, would never more meet his sight; and his mother, broken in mind and body by her long attendance upon her, now plead with him to return and see her before she died.

Silently Harry handed the letter to the judge; and motioning Edward to follow him, sought his chamber.

"Excuse me," said Edward, as Harry offered him a chair. "I would like to stop very much, but I have an editorial to prepare to-night, and have not even commenced it. Shall I see you to-morrow?"

"Yes, if you will meet me at the morning boat. I must leave at once for the North."

"Your mother is not well, Charles wrote me; but I hope it is nothing serious."

"Perhaps not," returned Harry; "still, as she wishes to see me, I shall go. At what hour does the boat leave?"

"At seven. You will have to be up at the dawn of day, to get your breakfast and ride down in time."

"I shall be there," said Harry.

"Where I will meet you, then; so good-night!" and Edward departed, leaving Harry to the companionship of his own sad thoughts. Ellen faithless? No, he would not believe that; but full of blame. Emma buried, his mother dying, and the judge, his second father, he feared, irrecoverably hurt — his heart was heavy, and life a burden!

But he had no time for the indulgence of such

feelings. Something must be done, and quickly done. Speak to the judge? He could not; his pen must be the medium of his explanations. Rapidly he wrote:

"DEAR SIR:—As the shadows of evil often precede its actual approach, so have I frequently felt an undefined dread in the anticipation of the hour when my long engagement to Miss Clifford, of Boston, should become known to you. Not that I have had the slightest wish to keep you in ignorance of the fact; on the contrary, the confession has oftentimes trembled upon my lips; but as often have you, by some unintentional word or act, prevented its avowal. The last attempt that I thus made, was upon a ride taken with you the last spring, during which we met Mr. Elmore, who had just returned from his foreign tour. If you will recall the conversation we then had, you cannot fail to perceive its connection with such a disclosure. You will ask, perhaps, why it was withheld during the first recital of my history to you? But I think, upon a little reflection you will understand how out of place and unnecessary it must then have appeared to me, as I had at the time no expectation whatever of remaining with you beyond the hour. Neither had I then, nor have I now, received the approbation or consent of her father; so that I should scarcely have been correct in such a statement, unless, as now, I had been sufficiently acquainted with you to give an explanatory record of feelings and circumstances, which to an utter stranger would have been impossible.

"I need not say how much I regret the misunder-

standing which has thus arisen. I hope and trust, however, that my character is too well understood for one shade of suspicion to rest upon my motives or designs. In my intercourse with Blanche (I speak of her as of a sister), I have had no intentions whatever but to promote her happiness, and future as well as present welfare. Strange as it may appear to you, she has hitherto seemed to me but as a child, a child whom I was to guide and teach; not once have I thought of her as a woman to be loved or wooed. In this I have erred, and foolishly erred; for although my sad experiences of actual life, and deep emotional feelings of the heart, have tended to make me feel as one too old for light and trivial matters, yet those who have not looked beneath the surface of my being, must still view me as I am — young both in years and appearance. But permit me here to say, that I think you have also been quite as much mistaken in the character of Blanche's feelings, as you have been in mine. She does not love me! I know her well; it is the novelty only of reproof and of censure, both of which she has received from me, that has for a time pleased her fancy. The slight restraint I have been to her, has been an agreeable change, surrounded as she has always been by flatterers and admirers; but nothing more. This, I am convinced, you will find to be the case. But, indebted as I am to you for a delightful year of study and improvement, and still more for words of fatherly counsel and affection, you may imagine how much it distresses me to have become the cause of disappointment, and, it may be, of displeasure to you. Allow me here to express in part the gratitude that I feel now, and ever shall feel

to you, as long as life shall last. The letter you have just read from my mother, entreating me to return home, you will doubtless agree with me, must be obeyed. It is well, perhaps, that these causes have so singularly combined to compel my departure; for otherwise, how could I ever voluntarily have left you, my second father? That the happiness which you so continually dispense to all around you, may ever be your own, is the sincere wish of your obliged and attached friend,

"HARRY SELDEN."

The letter ended, Harry rang his bell and sent it to the judge, who, he was told, had retired to his library; "probably," thought he, "awaiting this very communication."

A short time elapsed, which to Harry, however, appeared an age, when a knock at the door announced, as he supposed, the return of the servant. "Come in," he answered, and the judge entered.

"It is all right," he said, extending his hand to Harry, who, somewhat embarrassed, rose to receive him; "it has all been my fault; my wishes have blinded my judgment. Let it console you, however, that Mrs. Lincoln has never agreed with me in this matter; so it will be no unexpected disappointment to her, and, perhaps, not with Blanche either; for I have little doubt that what you say of her is true. I might have known she could never suit you; but my affection for both made a fool of me. And so you must leave me?" he asked, suddenly changing the conversation.

"Yes," said Harry, "my mother seems so very anxious."

"Certainly," interrupted the judge; "we must not shrink from the clear path of duty; but it will be a sore trial to me. However, I hope it will be only for a while, for I shall be alone in a few weeks, and shall need you sadly."

"You are very kind," said Harry.

"Then it is settled?" said the judge, warmly grasping his hand.

"Not exactly," said Harry; "for although I am very happy here, and very much obliged to you for your offers, do you not think that it is time I were before the public, building up a name and business for myself?"

"You are a long-headed Yankee, as Blanche would say," returned the judge; "nevertheless, I have outstripped you, for that is a conclusion that I came to some time ago, and have only been waiting a suitable opportunity of proposing a partnership to you."

"A partnership!" exclaimed Harry.

"Yes," said the judge; "I am tired of business of all kinds, and shall give up my seat upon the bench, and open an office in the city, if you please, in our joint names; you, however, must manage both the work and the profits, for I shall touch neither."

Harry knew that this was a great offer for the judge to make, as well as a most advantageous arrangement for himself; he, therefore, thanked him warmly; but the judge interrupted him, saying, "How soon do you intend leaving?"

"To-morrow morning, if convenient," said Harry.

"So soon!" exclaimed the judge. "Well, perhaps it is as well," he added; "but you will have to do your packing to-night."

Notwithstanding which, the judge remained late in Harry's chamber. It seemed impossible for him to put an end to the last evening he was to spend with him for months; and when, at length, he did leave, it was with a "good night" only, for he "would see him in the morning." And when Harry arose with the dawn, he found him already up, a breakfast prepared, and the carriage waiting; and when he turned with a full heart to say "Good-bye," the judge smiled and said, "Not yet;" and so accompanied him to Baton Rouge and to the boat, and stood lingering upon the wharf long after he had ceased to distinguish his form amid the crowded deck, and then turned slowly to the desolated home which had lately been so full of his presence.

But "Hope, that gay to-morrow of the mind," without which few of us could sustain the weighty presence of to-day, comforted and cheered him with promises of a speedy return and lengthened stay. And thus ended another phase of Harry's life!

CHAPTER THIRTY-SECOND.

JUST a year from the time that Harry Selden left his native city, he returned to it. He was no longer a sanguine youth, full of hope and joyful expectation; but a man who, having experienced the stern realities of life, girds on his armor for a struggle.

Painful memories and dark forebodings crowded upon his mind as he approached his mother's house, and stood upon the steps of his childhood's home, where his father had so often hastened to meet him. But he resolutely thrust them aside, and laying his hand upon the door, attempted to open it. It was locked, and he again felt disappointed and chilled, foolishly, perhaps, for he knew that he was not expected; and yet "trifles light as air" insensibly affect us, beyond the control of reason. He now quickly rang the bell, which was soon answered, but by a strange waiter, who did not know him.

"Miss Caroline and Mr. Charles were both out," he said; "and Mrs. Selden was quite indisposed. What name should he give?"

"None," said Harry, passing him, and hastily entering the drawing-room, and then the parlor. They were both natural, but both vacant; and looking disappointedly around, he asked—

"In which room is Mrs. Selden?"

"In her chamber, sir; she never leaves it now."

"Indeed!" She might, then, be really ill, he thought; and his intention to surprise her must be abandoned.

"Let her know that her son from Baton Rouge has arrived."

The man bowed, and left the room. How cold and desolate everything seemed!

"Mrs. Selden asks you to walk up, sir."

Harry silently followed the man; and noticing the old familiar hat-stand, and carpet, and entry clock, all as he had ever known them, felt that *he* only was changed, coloring everything with the sombre hue of his own thoughts. But he was mistaken; for in the emaciated form that feebly rose to meet him, as he entered the well-known chamber, he could scarcely recognize the mother whom he had last seen in the full bloom of health. Her hours were indeed numbered! one glance convinced him of it, and he sank upon a chair, with difficulty concealing the feelings which almost overpowered him.

Mrs. Selden, however, did not seem at all conscious of her changed appearance; and attributing his behavior merely to fatigue, contented herself by ordering refreshments to be brought him; and then, as had always been her habit, talked without ceasing, although with evident difficulty, telling him all the gossip and news of the city and family.

Her conversation jarred painfully upon Harry's feelings, and he felt little inclined to continue it. But he remembered it was his mother, and his sick mother; and, rousing himself, strove to keep up the appearance, at least, of interest. At length she

spoke of Emma, and of her illness; of her great anxiety to see Harry, and of her fondness for him; of which she had given proof, by leaving him sundry little articles as remembrances, together with her portion of the estate.

"But," continued Mrs. Selden, "you surely will not take this pittance from me in my old age, when Mr. Leslie says you are going to be so rich?"

These particulars of his sister's death Harry had not before heard, and he now felt much softened at the new proofs of her affection towards him. But his mother's selfishness, displayed in the conclusion of her remarks, at once checked his rising emotion; and merely to continue the conversation, he asked—

"By what means am I to become so rich?"

"Why, are you not engaged to a lady with a large fortune, a Cuban heiress?"

"To Blanche Lincoln? Did Edward Leslie say I was?"

"To be sure he did; and that he heard it from your own lips."

"And you believed him?"

"Certainly; why should we not?"

At this moment, Charles and Caroline entered the room. They had heard of Harry's arrival, and hastened to meet him with as warm a welcome as he could have desired. Much that was pleasant and heartfelt passed between them, and the load upon Harry's mind insensibly lightened; and he wondered to find himself joking Caroline upon her recent engagement to William Chauncey, and Charles upon his, to the rich Miss Warner.

"Say what you will," said Charles, putting his

hands in his pockets, and shrugging his shoulders, "her fortune will be the making of me. It is just what I have been wishing, so as to take the place in the firm of Mr. Lindsey, who died a short time ago."

"Wasn't it strange that Edwin Sanford should let such a chance escape him?" said Mrs. Selden, who was tired of being kept so long in the shade.

"How escape him?" asked Charles, angrily. "I have told you fifty times, she had no idea of marrying him."

"So she says now," continued his mother; "but it was not what she thought a month ago."

Charles was about to reply, when Harry interfered, rather fearfully, however, for he felt that he was approaching a tender topic. But the suspense was terrible. "And what is to become of Edwin Sanford?"

"Why he is following in your footsteps; and is as much in love with Ellen Clifford as ever you were. How you came to desert her is a mystery to me, she is such a splendid girl!"

"Who says I have deserted her?"

"Why Edward Leslie. Are you not engaged to Miss Lincoln?"

"No: I have never thought of such a thing."

"And you still love Ellen?"

"Certainly I do," returned Harry, the color mounting to his temples. His love was still too sacred a theme for such garish sunlight.

"You had better lose no time, then," continued Charles, "for I have just parted from Edwin Sanford, who was on his way to see her. Mr. Clifford, it

seems, has promised her hand to him, and this morning is to decide the matter."

"And Ellen, what does she say?" asked Harry, recollecting painfully all that Edward Leslie had told him.

"Why, strange enough, she has persisted in disbelieving the report of your engagement, and refuses to break her promise to you. They will force her, however, if possible; for Edwin says he will not be put off a second time."

Harry had already seized his hat, and was soon rapidly approaching Mr. Clifford's house. But for what purpose? what was he going to do? what say? Any thing, every thing, to win her, who was now dearer to him than ever!

A half hour before, Ellen had been summoned to her father's library, and had tremblingly obeyed. She looked pale and miserable; but her father was stern and unyielding. He "had promised her hand to Mr. Sanford, and would keep his word."

"You forget your previous promise to me then?" said Ellen.

"That is sheer nonsense!" exclaimed Mr. Clifford; "you have been told positively of Selden's engagement, and should be ashamed of such barefaced obstinacy. You now hear my commands, and shall obey them."

"Never!" said Ellen, determinedly.

But Mr. Clifford had already risen, and opening the door, much to her dismay admitted Edwin Sanford, who had been waiting in the adjoining room.

Ellen shrank from him as he advanced towards

her, and covering her face with her hands, sank into a chair. She saw that the dreaded trial had come, and she feared she had not strength to meet it as she would have wished; for she had suffered much of late, and her nerves, she felt, were unequal to severe conflict.

"You are not well," said Edwin, observing her paleness, as with a great effort she removed her hand, and turning to him, prepared to speak.

"No," she answered, emboldened by his considerate tone, "I am not well; but you can assist much towards my recovery. Once before you acted generously towards me; will you not do so now?"

"Do you deserve it now, as then?"

"No; I have done wrong, very wrong; but it was under great excitement, and only for the one night; since which I have striven hourly to undo the evil."

"It can never be undone," said Edwin, frowning and resuming his determined tone and manner. "It has been your own work, and you must meet the consequences. Your father has promised me, and cannot break his word."

"And shall I break mine?" asked Ellen.

"To whom?"

"Why ask? you have known all along of my engagement to Mr. Selden."

"Yes, and of his present desertion."

"Which I do not believe," said Ellen; "but allowing it were so, would you break a wounded heart?"

"No; I would strive to heal it to the utmost of

my power," and Edwin drew nearer to her; but she motioned him away, saying —

"That you could never do; it would be a life of misery to us both. My heart is Harry's, whether it beats for him here, or in another world."

"Nonsense!" said Mr. Clifford, returning to the room just in time to hear this last remark; "if this is all you can say for yourself, just listen to me for a moment."

"Hear me first, if you please," said Harry, who, entering by the door Mr. Clifford had inadvertently left open, now approached the group, and taking Ellen by the hand, turned to her father with a cold bow, saying, "Excuse my boldness, sir; but I come to claim this hand as mine, before it is promised to another."

"That has already been done," said Edwin, haughtily.

"Not by Ellen?" said Harry, gazing enquiringly upon her, and reading his answer in the depths of her loving eyes.

"What is all this?" cried Mr. Clifford, recovering somewhat from his surprise. "What right have you, sir, to enter this house without my permission?"

"The right of defending the weak," said Harry. "I have just arrived in the city; and hearing accidentally of what was going on, have come at once to clear up the misunderstanding which has been produced, I hear, by a false report of some other engagement of mine, sir."

Edwin bit his lip. It was evident, then, that the report was unfounded. "If that is the case," he said, "I suppose I am in honor bound to you, as one

gentleman to another, to withdraw my suit; but to *her* tears and entreaties I should never have listened. Mr. Clifford, I release you from your promise;" saying which he took his hat, and with a formal bow, departed.

Released from his presence, Ellen now turned to her father, and plead earnestly for the fulfilment of his promise to her. But Mr. Clifford threw her from him, saying, "Yes, and take my eternal curse with it!"

But his anger changed to terror as she fell speechless at his feet. Even upon Harry he called for help, but he, too, was powerless. She lay so cold and lifeless between them! Had he won, but to lose her?

CHAPTER THIRTY-THIRD.

Anxious hours, and days, and nights, succeeded to the members of Mr. Clifford's household; for Ellen, their pride and joy, was stretched upon a bed of sickness, which all feared might prove to be that of death. The constant excitement under which she had so long labored, the doubts and fears with which she had so long struggled, had made her the ready victim of a fever then prevalent in the city. To the wild ravings of delirium, to the tender accents of love in which she called upon Harry to return to her, or to the eloquent pleadings with which she implored her

father's reconciliation and love, her friends listened in fearful suspense. No symptom of returning consciousness had cheered them, since that death-like swoon in which Harry had last seen her. *Last seen her!* Was it the last he was ever to see of her? No, it could not be, was the answer of his heart, as with restless anxiety he paced before her father's door; a door which, by Mr. Clifford's order, was closed to him, but from which he received the tidings upon which his very life depended.

Noiselessly he approached, and beckoned to the servant who was in waiting. But his voice refused its utterance, as he saw the sorrowful countenance of the man; and foreboding the worst that could have happened, he leaned upon the door for support.

"Miss Ellen, they hope, is better," said the man, advancing towards him; "she has been asleep this long time. Mr. Clifford calls it the crisis, I believe, and has sent for the doctor."

"And here he comes," said Harry.

"Hope for the best," said Dr. Jones, shaking him by the hand; "this sleep is life to her. But you are ill yourself; come, I must prescribe for you. My carriage is at the corner; go and wait in it, until I come and tell you all. There will be good news, I promise you;" and the old doctor, who had known Harry from a boy, and felt deeply for his present trial, passed hastily up the stairs, and entering the chamber of sickness, pressed to the bed-side, and gazed intently upon its occupant. A hopeful smile beamed upon his countenance, as he turned hurriedly to caution those about him as to their behavior; but the sleeper had already wakened.

"Papa," she said to the agitated form that was bending over her, "I have had such strange dreams!"

"Happy ones, I hope," said Mr. Clifford, with difficulty suppressing his emotion.

"Yes, very happy. I thought Harry was here, and you had forgiven us. Is it true," she asked, looking suddenly around; "is Harry really here?"

"No," answered Mr. Clifford, as a frown gathered upon his brow; "you have been dreaming."

"Dreaming the truth, however," said the doctor, with the sudden energy of a man who hopes to set all things right by a great, unlooked-for movement. "Harry is at the door now, in my carriage. I'll bring him up;" and the doctor left the room, but was quickly followed by Mr. Clifford.

"Are you mad?" he asked.

"No, it may save her life; she will gradually recall the past, and, perhaps, sink under it, if not restored at once to your favor and Harry's love."

"Never!" said Mr. Clifford.

"Her death be upon your head, then, not upon mine. I shall attend her no longer."

Mr. Clifford paused; for Doctor Jones had for long years been his family physician, and was justly reputed the best in the city; where could he find his equal? But, then, the alternative; admit Harry upon friendly terms? never. He, therefore, coldly answered, "As you please, sir."

"And I shall publish you as her murderer," continued the doctor.

"How so, sir? there are other physicians in the city beside yourself."

"And think you they will attend when I tell them of your infatuation, your madness? not one would enter these doors. Harry, I tell you, must be admitted, and at once. I lose priceless moments;" and without waiting for an answer, the doctor descended to his carriage, quickly told his errand, and conducted Harry at once to the chamber, where Ellen's changed countenance immediately told to his experienced eye that memory had resumed her throne, and was busily unlocking her painful reminiscences.

"Harry Selden waits to see you," he whispered; and the dull eye brightened, and a faint color tinged her cheek, as, surprised, she cast around an eager enquiring glance, and met the gaze of devoted love, which restored her to earth and happiness!

Rapidly she improved; for love and affection in every form hovered about her pillow, whispering of a beautiful, loving future!

But the past could not be forgotten; and although it was instinctively avoided by all, yet at times it would rise so vividly into life, as to terrify Ellen by its reality. Vainly she would strive against its approach, and then give way to its sway, and live it all over again. Upon one of these occasions it was that a hitherto unnoticed fact thrust itself upon her mind. Her father and Harry had never once met in her presence! and she caught a slight glimpse of the truth — they were not yet reconciled.

She was still weak, and the thought overcame her; so that her father, who entered at the moment, was startled at her appearance; and lifting her in

his arms, placed her upon the sofa, chafing her hands and temples. It was near the hour of Harry's daily visit, and Ellen tremblingly determined to assure herself of the truth.

"Papa," she said, "let me lean upon you;" but scarcely had he complied with her wish, when the well-known ring, which had so often driven him from her side, announced the arrival of the hated visitor. Ellen, too, heard it, and her breath came quickly; and once more her father's attention was directed to her relief; and thus was he engaged when Harry Selden entered.

They had not met since their first interview, so terrible in its consequences. But each felt the necessity of concealing their real position and feelings; so that when Ellen extended her hand to Harry, and drawing his toward her, placed it beseechingly into her father's, it was not only taken as a thing of course, but a well-sustained conversation ensued, which not only calmed her excited feelings, but lulled her fears to rest.

And thus was her wish accomplished. The ice now broken melted imperceptibly away; and although their intercourse was cold, it was, nevertheless, continued; and before many months had flown, preparations were in progress for the approaching festival which was to celebrate the nuptials of the two sisters.

Life was to commence anew for them. With marriage come other duties, other joys, and other trials; and this they were conscious of, as all women are, and trembled at the prospect. But the bridegrooms,

how different were their feelings! Life to *them* seemed just complete. College days were over; professional studies ended. Their course was marked out; and with their chosen ones at their side, what more had they to do, but to walk boldly on, each day secure of happiness? The dreamy half of life was closing upon them, and gladly they gave it up for the actual working-day of existence.

Let us follow upon their steps till this, too, is drawing to a close, and see whether the seed sown has produced pleasant fruit!

END OF PART FIRST.

PART SECOND.

ACTUAL LIFE.

CHAPTER FIRST.

Let us glance over Ellen Clifford's shoulder as she writes:

"Boston, *May 7th.*—It is a bright thought. I will keep a journal! It will be so pleasant, after the lapse of years, to recall the scenes of my married life, and trace the progress of our love from this my wedding-day, so full of hope and bright promise, so replete with —— But no, this will never do. If you, dear journal, are to become the key of memory's casket, I must be true both to myself and to you. What, then, are my present thoughts and feelings? Are they such as fancy pictured? No; papa is cross and stingy, mamma looks fretted and worried, Mary is anxious, and I am tired, and would be glad to rest awhile, and sleep without waking for one week at least. These preparations have wearied me. I used

to think the wedding would be the pleasantest part of getting married, but now I dread it, and wish it fairly over, and we far away from all this bustle and excitement. This having a day appointed, and looked forward to, is dreadful, and destructive of all kind of pleasure. People should be married just when they feel like it, without any of this tiresome fuss and ceremony. I never loved Harry less than I do to-day! And now I think of it, I verily believe he feels the same; for never before has he paid me so short a visit as he did this morning. To be sure, he apologised for 'tearing himself away' so soon; but was 'compelled to, on account of his business,' which our wedding-tour, it seems, somewhat interferes with. Nevertheless, a man has no right, I say, to think of business on his wedding-day!"

"NIAGARA, *May 21st.*—Here I am, married but two little weeks, and yet how changed! I wonder if all women have such a waking up? If the honeymoon is, as I have read, the cream of married life, heaven help me with the skimmed milk! But now I think of it, it is only man who writes of the honeymoon; I cannot remember a woman ever writing or saying a word upon the subject. They lose the angel stamp too soon to please them, and find themselves so naturally and so unavoidably changing places with their former lovers; thinking, in turn, only of *their* wishes, what will please *them*, &c. Oh! foolish, foolish woman! you are a common mortal after all, and may as well give up your ideal life, and settle down at once, with what grace you can, to your unfailing domestic cares and plagues.

There is Harry! he must not see this, for *of course* I love him as much as I ever did, only it is different, so *very* different!"

"BOSTON, *June 1st.* — Now I am indeed happy, for we have at last arrived at *home, our home!* Two little words, and yet how expressive! Last night was the proudest of my life, as I took my seat for the first time at the head of my own table! To be sure, we had very little to eat, and Harry laughed at me a great deal about my housekeeping. But how could I help it? we had arrived only a half hour before, and were not at all expected by the servants. I am so glad we hastened our return, for I find that our friends have made arrangements to welcome us *en masse* to-morrow evening. How surprised they will be to find us already arrived and quite domesticated! I have bound the servants to secrecy, and anticipate rare pleasure in witnessing their surprise and disappointment. And dear Harry! how much I have wronged him; instead of running off to his office this morning, as I expected he would, he has himself offered to accompany me to Roxbury to see Mary, and find how she bears her matronly honors. Ah! there's the carriage, papa's beautiful present to me!"

CHAPTER SECOND.

"No matter about your sofa-cushion, Mary; pretty as it will no doubt be, it is, nevertheless, a shame to waste these golden hours in the house," said Frederick Harvey.

And the gentle bride put down the shreds of silk she was busily sewing together, and was soon climbing green hills and plucking wild flowers, while precious words from the lips of him she loved fell upon her ear and warmed her heart. There was beauty in every thing to their glad spirits, except, perhaps, in the cloud of dust raised by a carriage which, rapidly dashing by the fence they were in the act of climbing, they soon saw stopping at their own cottage door.

"Let us turn into the woods again," said Mary: "I am in no mood for visitors to-day."

Frederick hesitated; and then smiling, said, "You'll not be troubled by them long, so you had better see all who come."

"Why so?" asked Mary, looking enquiringly into his face, as she, however, obeyed the slight inclination of his arm, and walked toward the house.

"Your home," returned Frederick, "is too humble to please guests."

An opinion which, strange as it appeared to Mary, was echoed at the very moment by Ellen, who, entering the small and rather old-fashioned parlor,

was much surprised to find that but very few alterations had been made in its arrangement.

"Well, I did suppose," she said, somewhat indignantly, "that Frederick would at least have bought new furniture. Poor Mary! how can she breathe in such a nut-shell?"

"Pretty well, I should think," returned Harry, "judging from her looks; for there she comes, as bright as the flowers she brings. Ah! she has found out who we are, and is running to meet you."

Never before had the sisters known the pleasure of a meeting; for never before had they been separated. The visit therefore was a long one; and yet Ellen declared, when laughingly reminded by Harry of the lapse of time, that she had still so much to tell, and so much to consult with Mary about, that she could not possibly part with her. And so it was decided that Mary should return with them to Boston, where Frederick would meet her in the evening.

Ellen's cup was now full. Both Mary and Harry with her for a whole day! and then the promised pleasures of the evening, her meeting with her father, whom she still fondly loved, and with Mr. Gray, and all her friends! Not a shadow darkened the picture, until, as she entered her elegant home, and saw the evident surprise with which Mary glanced at the luxuries around her, she felt sensible of the contrast it must present to her own humble cottage, and almost regretted the pertinacity with which she had insisted upon her accompanying her. Quickly and carelessly she therefore passed through the rooms, soon engaging their joint attention upon the preparations for the approaching entertainment.

But great as was Mary's surprise at the elegance around her, it did not surpass her real pleasure, for she knew Ellen's fondness for display, and that without it, she could hardly have been happy; while, as in contrast with her own situation she could not view it, for they were too different in all their tastes, aims, and desires, to be compared for an instant. From infancy they had breathed, as it were, a different atmosphere; and each now seemed to her well fitted for her allotted sphere.

Were their paths, then, to be so very different? To a superficial observer, their position certainly seemed widely apart; but was it really so?

Harry Selden's circumstances were undoubtedly far better than he had at first expected. His mother's death, a few weeks previous to his marriage, had left him in possession of the house which had been his father's, and to which he was so much attached; for possessing, as he did, his own and Emma's portion, and being also the eldest of the family, his brother Charles, who was already united to Miss Warner and her fortune, and his sister Caroline, who had lately been married to William Chauncey, felt the justice of his claim, and willingly allowed him to purchase their portions. Gladly would he now have retained the furniture he so much venerated, with the old familiar household gods, which spoke to him so eloquently of his childhood's years; but Ellen, would she be satisfied? "To please me, she might," he thought; "but ought I to take advantage of her love? A woman's house is her world!" and so he made use of the remaining portion left him by his sister, to remodel and refurnish. "With a nice

house and furniture belonging to us," he reasoned, "my profession, and my own share of the estate, will certainly maintain us."

And thus, too, had Mr. Clifford been unexpectedly spared the embarrassments he had secretly apprehended, for he had lately become almost parsimonious towards his daughters. Yet not from any apparent want of means, or desire of hoarding; for upon Frank he still lavished, even more than ever, every indulgence within his reach. Well pleased was he, therefore, that the fact of Frederick and Harry both having furnished houses for their brides, afforded him a plausible excuse for not contributing to this customary feature of a bride's dowry; while, ever desirous to preserve appearances, on account of the world's opinion, he made them each the offer of a handsome carriage and horses.

Ellen accepted hers with delight, for it was a "luxury she *could* not have expected from Harry; and yet how incomplete was fashionable life, without a carriage!"

But Mary, conscious of the contrast it would afford to Frederick's cottage and prospects, disappointed her father by requesting his present in a different form, thus defeating the purpose of his gift. As this, however, could not be acknowledged, her wish was complied with, and its equivalent placed at her disposal. Already irritated by this incident, it was not to be wondered at that his first visit to Roxbury should have been productive of chagrin and anger. "Why had she not made use of his liberality to improve the appearance of her dwelling?" Her warm welcome could not gladden

him, nor her loving words soften him; and he left her with the bitterness of offended pride in his heart. His pleasure, therefore, upon entering Ellen's parlor that evening, and finding it so handsomely fitted up, could scarcely have been greater. Clasping her fondly in his arms, he turned and greeted Harry with more warmth than he had for years exhibited towards him. "A pretty trick you have played us all," he said; "but we are so glad to get you back again, that we can scarcely quarrel with you for coming too soon."

Ellen was in her element, the "observed of all observers;" and well did she bear the scrutiny, for the brightness of a happy heart beamed forth from every feature, and revealed itself in every action; so that Harry, as he proudly gazed upon her, felt well rewarded for the sacrifice he had made to please her. But while thus congratulating himself upon the pains he had taken to scatter around her those elegancies which she so well became, he was himself the subject of severe animadversion in a distant part of the room.

"All is not gold that glitters," said a member of that formidable class, whose representatives are sure to fill a corner in every circle; "I fear that Mr. Selden will come out of the small end of the horn. People say that he has really nothing at all, with all this show and parade."

"Young people always begin too large when left to themselves," returned her companion. "But it is better, *I* think, to be too lavish than too close, as Frederick Harvey has been; why he had better bury Mary at once. He ought to be ashamed of himself."

"And so he is, I suspect; just look at him now how he hangs his head. I noticed him when he first entered the room; he stopped as suddenly as if he were shot."

The opening of the door, and a slight bustle in the hall, now attracted the attention of the gossips, one of whom exclaimed, as Frank and Susan entered the room —

"Ah! there comes a happy couple; they have the true metal. Mr. Clifford, too, I hear, is going to leave Frank every thing."

"Yes, and so is Mr. Gray. They say, however, he has changed of late, and grown quite stingy. You know he used to be so fond of Frederick?"

"And the mother, too," interrupted her companion.

"Oh, shame! There was no truth in that story, or at least very little, which his present behavior shows; for, as I was going to say, he has given them nothing at all, although he must see how they need it."

"It must have been a disappointment to them; I dare say they expected a handsome present."

Thus oftentimes, amid the chaff of exaggeration and falsehood, do these "busy-bodies in other men's matters" sift out a beaten grain of truth; for it was, indeed, owing to this very disappointment that Frederick had been subjected to so much mortification. Frequently during the first few weeks of his engagement had Mr. Gray taken occasion to claim for himself the credit of obtaining Mr. Clifford's consent to their union, intimating at the same time his consequent obligation to "play the Ravens of the brook

Cherith, and supply their wants." These open hints wore so much the aspect of a promise, that Frederick and his mother had both felt much relieved regarding the pecuniary arrangements for the marriage, and had projected many little improvements in their cottage and furniture which they otherwise could not have afforded. Under this impression they had early commenced their preparations, indulging freely in paint, blinds, paper, &c. But fortunately for them, before any expense had been incurred beyond their own means of defraying, Mr. Gray's present, consisting merely of an order for Frederick's wedding suit and of a handsome work-table for his bride, awakened them from their dream. The external appearance of their house had certainly been improved; but, alas! it made only the more conspicuous the sad deficiencies of the interior. Gladly would Frederick have gone into debt for some little modernizing and adornment of his home. But Mrs. Harvey, ever true to herself and to her principles, prevailed upon him rather to submit with resignation to his circumstances, and in living down his pride to live above the world he so much dreaded. But it was a bitter foretaste of the life of want and self-denial that seemed lengthening out before him; and many times he regretted the impulse that had carried him into the folly of asking another to share so doubtful a lot. The smiles, however, of his gentle bride soon lit up the walls of his dwelling more brilliantly than the most exquisite paintings, and he was happy, very happy, except at times when, as now, the vanities of the world seemed to rise up in mockery before him. "Can Mary really be happy," he asked himself upon

his return home, "with such humiliating contrasts around her?" But he felt rebuked as he saw the sweet smile with which she greeted his mother, saying, "I have thought of you all the evening," and secretly determined never again to allow the shadows of doubt and despondency to darken the sunshine of her love and presence.

CHAPTER THIRD.

Mrs. Harvey and Mary were both busily engaged, one morning, with their domestic duties, which they always tried to accomplish during the absence of Frederick, when he hastily entered with a letter.

"There," said he, "is a letter I have just received. Read it, and talk it over, while I go and school my mind and feelings into a more reliable state. I would not act rashly, so I must judge coolly."

Saying which he immediately left them, and sought his study; where, closing his door, and casting himself upon his knees, he applied to his Heavenly Father for the guidance which he felt to be so necessary in this critical hour. There let us leave him, and return to the parlor, where Mary is reading aloud to his mother, the letter which seemed to require so much careful consideration.

It was from a gentleman residing in one of the interior towns of the State, who mentioned "that,

having had the pleasure, during a late visit to Boston, of hearing a sermon preached by Mr. Harvey, he had, upon his return home, obtained for him an unconditional call to the church of which he was a member." He also proceeded to give him many particulars concerning the congregation, which proved the situation to be an unusually desirable one.

"How glad I am," said Mary; "for now Frederick will feel that he is doing some good in the world, instead of lying idly by, as he says, rusting away his talents."

"How large a congregation did you say?" asked Mrs. Harvey, thoughtfully.

"Twelve or fifteen hundred persons," said Mary, again consulting the letter.

"Large enough to satisfy him, then," said Mrs. Harvey, with evident satisfaction.

"Do you know anything of the place?" asked Mary.

"Yes, I was there a few years ago. It would be a very beautiful town were it not for its factories, which, situated directly upon the river, injure its appearance very much. The upper part of it, however, is still very pleasant, and the surrounding country delightful. The most beautiful walks and rides that can be imagined!"

"Delightful!" exclaimed Mary. "How soon do you think we can go?"

"Immediately, I suppose," said Mrs. Harvey; "for it seems they are without even a supply at present. But would you not be sorry to leave all your friends?"

"I do not leave all," said Mary, tenderly kissing her.

"No, but you would be leaving a great many; and for very different scenes from those you have been accustomed to."

"That is true; but with you and Frederick I shall be happy anywhere; although, I confess, I shall miss Ellen sadly enough," she said, her voice faltering as she spoke. Quickly, however, she recovered herself; and was still amusing Mrs. Harvey with her many plans for their removal, &c., when Frederick again entered the room.

"Well," he said, "what conclusion have you come to?"

"About what?" asked Mrs. Harvey.

"Why the call I have received. You have been reading the letter, I see."

"Yes," said Mary, "until we know it by heart; and mother and I have made all the arrangements, and are only waiting your order to pack our trunks. I shall enjoy the walks along the banks of that beautiful river so much!"

But while she thus ran on, Mrs. Harvey's quick glance had already deciphered Frederick's gravity.

"You'll not accept it, I see?" she said, enquiringly.

"Will it be a disappointment to you?" he asked.

Mrs. Harvey smiled. "Neither sunshine nor storms have power over the aged tree," she said; then glancing expressively at Mary's downcast countenance, she added, "Youth is the season of disappointment."

"How is it, Mary?" asked Frederick, turning to her; "would you regret my refusal very much?"

"I thought you would have been pleased," she answered, evasively.

"And so I was at first," he returned; "but now I feel differently. Still, if you both decide against me, I will reconsider the matter."

"Give us the reasons for your decision," said Mrs. Harvey, "and you may convince us instead."

"In the first place, then," said Frederick, "it is a manufacturing town."

"A very good field, therefore, I should think, for usefulness," returned his mother.

"Yes, but not of a character suited to my tastes and abilities. Every one has his own peculiar sphere of action, out of which he is ill-employed and unsatisfied; now I am convinced that this is not the situation for which I am fitted."

"Why so? the church is a flourishing one, and the congregation large.'

"And, therefore, almost any one might fill it as well, and a great many better, perhaps, than I. There is a nobler work awaiting me."

"But until this presents itself, should you not perform the duty nearest to you?"

"Nothing can be a duty which results in evil."

"I cannot see the evil of accepting any call for the present," said his mother, almost sternly.

"The evil of deterioration is what I allude to," said Frederick. "To write sermons suitable to such a congregation, would be below my standard."

"Write your best, then, and elevate them."

"It is impossible; it requires long years for the

sapling to become a tree. A different style of preaching, considering their prevailing habits and modes of thought, would develope them more gradually, and, perhaps, more healthfully. Besides, I could not write two sermons a week and do justice either to my capacity or my aim."

"But would not these objections militate against every church alike?"

"Not in such a body; for with a smaller congregation I should have less to do during the week, and, therefore, more time to prepare for the Sabbath. The character, too, of a country village is always of a certain and distinctive tone; so that what suits the few also suits the many. A minister's responsibilities are, therefore, much lessened; and a mild and persuasive form of preaching the most that is necessary. Whereas a mixed population, such as the one we now contemplate, requires an active, energetic man, who, going among them during the week, conversing alike with all, discovering their besetting sins and temptations, enters his pulpit on the Sabbath ready to hurl those threats and denunciations upon their heads which alone could waken them to repentance. For sins such as they are liable to yield only to direct and rough treatment, which," said Frederick, thoughtfully, "is entirely incompatible with my tastes and feelings."

There was silence for some minutes, during which all seemed absorbed with their own reflections. At length Mrs. Harvey asked, "And would you be satisfied with a village church?"

Frederick smiled. "I was just considering that

very question," he said, "and think it probable I would not, at least not for life."

"There may be more pride, then, mingling with your objections than you are aware of," returned his mother.

"I hardly think so," said Frederick; "for of the two situations, I should unhesitatingly accept the least profitable, and the least flattering."

During the above conversation, Mary had sat as a mere listener, for she felt that she was hardly a judge in the matter. She now, however, looked up, and timidly asked, "Do you think of any situation that would suit you?"

"No, the way does not seem clear before me; but my appointed work, surrounded as it is with mist and clouds, is nevertheless distinct enough to rivet my gaze, and excite me to renewed exertion."

"Tell us, then, what it may be," said Mrs. Harvey, "so that we may be better judges hereafter."

Frederick paused for a moment, as if to collect his thoughts, and then said: "It is to guide and instruct, by any means whatever, whether by preaching, lecturing, or writing, the few or the many unsatisfied and doubting, yet enquiring minds, who are found here, there, and everywhere, thirsting for the water of life, but who turn disappointedly away from the meagre and unpalatable draughts compounded of lifeless doctrines and idle forms, which are offered them by the common clergy. 'Feed my lambs,' saith Christ; and these are they that I would lead into pleasant pastures."

Frederick had spoken earnestly. None could have doubted the deep feeling that prompted his words;

and Mary hung her head, awed by his solemnity, while the tear-drop glistened in the mother's eye, as she lifted her heart in fervent prayers to the Savior of the world, that his pure desires might not be disappointed.

Frederick had risen from his seat, and approaching the window, gazed intently from it for a few minutes; then returning to his mother, he bent fondly over her, and kissing her placid brow, said, in a low, tender voice, "You, dear mother, have been long tried in the furnace, and have become as gold purified in the fire; *you* will always bear with me. But can you, Mary," he said, turning to the trembling girl, "can you, too, bear with the trials before us, and with a brave heart?"

Weeping, Mary threw her arms about him; and in whispered words comforted and strengthened him with the promise of at least a willing spirit.

Weeks glided by, and much need had Mary for this "willing spirit." Brought up as she had been surrounded by every possible comfort and luxury, the only crosses she had known had been an occasional rebuke from her otherwise indulgent father, and her own fears of his refusal to her marriage. The daily vexations and trials, therefore, attendant upon straitened circumstances, were new to her; and had she been left to struggle alone with the difficulties, present and anticipated, which so often presented themselves, she too, like many of her sex, might have faltered in the path before her; and instead of being the proper helpmeet of her chosen partner, have become but a stumbling-block in his onward course. But Mrs. Harvey's living faith, ever active

and ever present, encouraged and stimulated her; while her tempered light diffused so chastened an influence upon all around, that Mary was insensibly refreshed and strengthened.

Well, too, was it for Frederick that such an atmosphere of peace and love surrounded him; for this was an important epoch of his mental and religious experience. Long had he been stumbling in darkness and doubt; but the clouds were now lifting, and his vision becoming clearer. When at first he had turned disappointedly away from the hollow and bigoted teachings of a systematized theology, he had stood trembling upon the borders of unbelief. But "God held the reins of his thoughts;" and after much inward disquietude and mental darkness, was now leading him into the very midst of the Holy of Holies. Its mighty mysteries were rapidly unfolding, one by one, before his purified gaze, until at length, filled with its richness and beauty, he bowed his head in prayer, that the time might be hastened when he should have the place and opportunity to unveil its glories to a benighted world. And God "heard his breathing and his cry," for upon the following day he received an invitation from one of the largest and most intelligent congregations in the city of Boston, to fill their pulpit during the absence of their pastor, whose ill health obliged him, for a time, to seek a more genial climate.

CHAPTER FOURTH.

UNEXPECTEDLY as Frederick had been called to fill a post of such great responsibility, he was, nevertheless, found with his "loins girded," and his "light burning." Many were the congratulations he received alike from the friends who had clung to him in adversity's hour, and from those who had one by one almost imperceptibly dropped him from their list. He was now a man of mark. Where else could such teachings be heard? Not only the body of the church, but the aisles and galleries were crowded with admiring auditors. But he turned a deaf ear to their flatteries; and often would he say to Mary that "it was the music and not the meat" they relished, although amid the throng he could oftentimes detect by the glistening eye and heaving breast the few earnest spirits which were, in deep seriousness, answering to his call. This was the praise that filled his heart with joy, and gave him strength to perform his work; for his path, smooth as it appeared, was indeed a perilous one. How could he walk humbly before his God, while such temptations to pride and self-righteousness beset him from within and without? Now it was that he felt the value of prayer, of humiliation, and of fasting. "Truly," he would say, "we know nothing of religion but experimentally. Let theories be ever so ingenious and

refined, they cannot convince the *heart* until the spirit and the flesh have struggled for the victory."

But happiness without alloy was Mary's portion. There was no cloud upon her horizon — she had at last found sure rest for her faltering steps upon the Rock that is never shaken. One of the first-fruits of Frederick's harvest, he looked upon her with a heart full of thanksgiving and tenderness. It would be impossible to define the feelings that bound the two so closely together. One as they had been in heart, they had now become one also in spirit. Her earthly comforts, too, had greatly increased; for Frederick's salary was a large one, and there was no longer any necessity for anxiety or fatigue. And as he was considered merely as supplying the pulpit for a time, she was of course excused from all share of the official burdens. Thus was her time at her own disposal; and many mornings did she accompany Frederick upon his daily visit to the city, and spend delightful hours with Ellen or with Susan."

Much was there to interest and amuse her upon these visits. For the life of Ellen was one scene of constant gayety, broken in upon only for the moment when this cherished sister came to spend a quiet day with her; then would she give up every amusement, and postpone any pleasure, and seem so delighted to see her, and have so much to tell of and to consult about, that it was with difficulty Mary could ever tear herself away. While at Susan's far different scenes awaited her. The young mother was to be nursed and flattered, while the little Frank, named after his fond grandpapa, was to be caressed and praised — every smile pronounced a gem of

beauty! every tear a pearly drop. And he, too, was to be brought within the arms of the Church, and by Frederick! Yes, the first little lamb introduced by him into the fold of Christ was to be this cherished infant!

Important were the preparations for the approaching day. Mr. Clifford, proud of his namesake, presented the massive silver bowl to be used upon the occasion; Mr. Gray the new pulpit prayer-book; and Ellen the beautiful christening robe; while numberless other gifts poured in from every side.

The question, too, of sponsors was one of grave interest and of frequent discussion. Was there no possible way by which Ellen, so dearly loved by Frank and Susan, could be paid the compliment? No, it was impossible. The rules of the church and its pastor pronounced her incompetent; and "try as hard as she could, she could not," she said, "become a Christian, great as the inducement was!" and so the honor descended upon Mary; the first time, perhaps, that she had ever taken the precedence of her beloved sister.

Harmony, however, reigned throughout. The ceremony was performed; the guests returned to Mrs. Gray's, and the christening cake was handed around.

"Well, my little hero," said Ellen, taking the beautiful child in her arms, and kissing him, "you have not shed a tear, and have done your pious godmother infinite credit. What a shame it is," she continued, turning to Frederick, "that you would not let me stand for the little cherub!"

"It was not I, but the church," he answered, "who decided against you."

"The church! the church! that is always the cry. Now what possible harm could I have done the child?"

Frederick smiled, and shook his head. It was not his wont to throw away counsel, or rebuke needlessly; and Ellen understood him.

"What an ominous shake!" she exclaimed; "saying very plainly that I am too vile a sinner even to be argued with."

But Frederick's only answer was another smile.

"It is that quiet sort of superiority that you ministers assume, that provokes me so," she now said, evidently annoyed. "I never yet could get one of the profession to converse rationally with me about what they pretend to be so much interested in. 'You are not prepared for the truth yet,' says one; 'the spirit has not yet sufficiently enlightened you,' says another; and so they quietly push you aside as unprofitable servants."

Many others now joined with Ellen, in her attack upon the ministry, which, however, as Frederick in no way pretended to parry, was soon exchanged for a general discussion upon the different phases of religion; a subject which, in fact, had lately become quite a fashionable topic of conversation.

Ellen bore her part at first with much spirit; but this gave way to real feeling as she proceeded. There was evidently no pretence in the opinions she expressed, neither did she hesitate to confess very distinctly what she did feel—her full reliance upon God, and her deep assurance of his love, goodness, and

mercy; but that she did not, and could not believe herself the dreadful sinner, which was of course necessary before she could feel any need of a Savior, and consequently the belief in Him, and love for Him, which was an essential feature of the Christian religion. "I remember," she said, "asking a minister not long ago, if there were any books he could recommend me to read upon this point, and he said yes, and promised to send me 'Owen on Forgiveness,' taking up his hat at the same time, as if he were very glad to be thus rid of both me and my subject. I waited, however, anxiously for the book; but when a few days elapsed, and it did not come, I procured it for myself, and read it, too. But precious little good it did me."

Frederick had hitherto stood almost as an unconcerned listener to the conversation; but, struck by Ellen's deep earnestness, he now turned a look of such interest upon her, that she felt emboldened to put the question to him which was trembling upon her lips.

"Is there no way," she asked, "by which a sinner can be made to acknowledge himself such?"

"I should suppose there were various ways," said Frederick.

"Do, pray then, tell me how?"

"That depends upon the individual," returned Frederick. "The physician adapts his medicine to the patient's constitution, habits, circumstances, &c."

"Well, don't be afraid to be personal," returned Ellen; "I really want to be enlightened, so tell me what your prescription is for me."

"With pleasure," said Frederick, "but not here;

we must be alone. The nurses and friends never share the patient's dose, and so weaken it. If you want to be well, you must follow all my directions."

"Agreed," said Ellen. "I believe you have more religion now, than all our solemn divinity doctors;" saying which, she stepped into an adjoining room with Frederick, and seating herself in a recess of a window, she said, "Frederick, I am in earnest. I hunger for this bread of life, and if you can give it to me, pray do, for I already delight in the little I have tasted."

Frederick paused for a moment; for as he gazed upon those beautiful and expressive features, so eager for the light, he felt what a responsibility rested upon him, and involuntarily prayed that his tongue might be loosened, and fitting words given him to speak.

Ellen, astonished at his silence, looked up, and blushed as she met his earnest gaze, and almost tremblingly bent down her eyes; for she felt that he, too, was in earnest, believing what he taught, and being really anxious for her soul's salvation.

"Ellen," he said, "you cannot know the responsibility I feel in the path I have chosen. My office is a high and glorious one; but so much the more care should I exercise in its performance—I almost fear to give the advice you ask." Frederick again paused; but as Ellen, awed by his solemn manner, continued silent, he proceeded: "You said you had been reading upon the subject before us: what other books besides Owen?"

"No other upon that subject in particular," said Ellen, "only generally; the Evidences of Christianity, &c."

"And nothing convinces you that you are a sinner?"

"No, they do not convince my heart, although I suppose, of course, that I must be one."

"You never do what is wrong, then?"

"Not intentionally."

"And you perform all your duties faithfully?"

"Yes, such as I consider my duties. I attend to my house, make Harry happy, and do as much good as I can, that is, in the position in which God has placed me."

"You omit nothing, then?"

"I don't attend the sewing-circle," said Ellen, with a smile that *would not* be suppressed, "which others, and perhaps you, may think a heinous crime. But I have n't the patience for their eternal gossip or stupid reading. I join the society, however, and pay my tax, and have a proportion of their work sent to a poor woman, whom I pay for doing it, which I consider a double charity."

"Well, we won't quarrel about that," said Frederick; "but is there nothing else that you omit?"

"Not that I know of."

"And you do nothing wrong?"

"No, nothing that I can think of. I am neither a tale-bearer, nor a scandal-monger, nor any thing of the kind."

"And what do you think of your friends?" asked Frederick; "are any of them sinners?"

"Oh, that is their business, not mine."

"Well, but make it yours for a little while. I may be wrong to give yon such advice; for in most instances it would lead to the most injurious conse-

quences. But you have a strong mind, and a generous one, and can be trusted to receive the good, and cast aside the evil. Watch your friends, then, narrowly, and see if there is one whom you think free either from the commission of error, or the omission of good. If you find the 'one righteous one,' I have nothing more to say, for *you*, then, may be another. But if you fail to discover one, you will hardly be inclined to think yourself the exception among all. So turn and apply the same rules to yourself—remember *the same*—and I am pretty sure your sin will find you out; and when it does, search deeper and deeper your motives and feelings, as well as actions; and when you at length find that all is vanity and selfishness, you will cry, 'Lord, save me, or I perish!'"

A few weeks after this conversation, Ellen confessed her love for the Savior by her first appearance at the communion-table.

"One such soul is of more value than the whole world," thought Frederick, as he presented her with the sacred elements.

CHAPTER FIFTH.

It must not be supposed that Ellen's customary habits of life were at all altered in consequence of her growth in religious belief and experience. There are styles of religion as well as grades; and hers was of a far different stamp from Mary's; as different as had always been their worldly pleasures. The retired habits and home qualities of the one were eminently suited to render her happy in the position she now occupied, and make Frederick likewise so. But had Ellen, in blind ignorance of the true purposes of religion, attempted to follow in her steps, and lead the same secluded and quiet life, not only her own, but Harry's happiness would have been forever wrecked, while her highly gifted endowments and rare accomplishments would have become useless and burdensome.

It is a fact too much overlooked by the world, that true, genuine religion must inevitably develope itself according to the temperament, tastes, or circumstances of the individual, or prove a miserable failure. Conformity to set rules or opinions blight the budding fruit, and leave in its stead the stinted growth of cold formality or unconscious hypocrisy.

Left to herself and her preconceived notions of the austerity and demands of religion, Ellen, in all probability, might for a time have become a prey

to the harassing self-denial and torturing fears so common to the young and inexperienced Christian. But Frederick had been her guide; and contrary to the usually careless and general instructions of the ministry, had counselled her according to her infirmities and her strength. While cautioning her against an overweening love of display, which she had confessed to be the greatest obstacle in her path, he, nevertheless, left her free to enjoy within proper limits the tastes, the gifts, and the friends, bestowed upon her by a wise and beneficent Creator; thus merely checking the fault, or rather constitutional weekness, which he knew the increasing delights of religion would eventually eradicate from her heart, far more effectually than a harsh and unnatural usage.

Time, also, and the common accidents of life, whether believed or not to be the wise and special dispensations of a superintending Providence, tend much to weaken the temptations of the young.

A very few days after Ellen's first public confession of her faith, she met with an unlooked-for trial of her principles.

"Robin, the right hand carriage horse died last night," said Harry, entering the room with an anxious, but not very regretful expression of countenance.

"Dead! one of the carriage horses!" exclaimed Ellen.

"Yes; the coachman told me yesterday that he was not well, but I did not suppose it so serious a matter."

"Poor Robin! where can we ever find so good a match?" said Ellen.

Harry mused for a moment; then seating himself beside her, said, "Ellen, I wish to ask you one or two questions; will you answer them, and truly?"

"Do you think I would answer otherwise?"

"No, not intentionally, but without due consideration, perhaps;" he again paused, but as Ellen did not reply, with evident effort he proceeded: "Ellen, how am I to treat you? as a beautiful creature, to be humored and exhibited for public admiration, or as a wife, sharing my anxieties as well as joys;" and as he spoke he fixed his searching glance upon her face, as if he would read every feeling of her heart in its expressive features.

"Oh, Harry! I will be so glad," she said, her eyes filling with tears, "if you would trust me with your confidence. Something, I have felt, has been troubling you of late; will you tell me now what it is?"

"Are you sure you can bear it?"

"Yes, very sure."

"Well, then, Ellen, I am not sorry that the horse is dead, for it will be a good excuse for giving up the carriage altogether."

"Give up our carriage!" exclaimed Ellen, in blank amazement.

"Yes," returned Harry, with a slight flush upon his manly brow; "the expense of keeping a carriage and horses, together with a coachman and waiter, is rather beyond my means, I find."

"Oh, how foolish I have been!" said Ellen; "I ought to have known all this without your telling me.

Indeed, I have done very wrong. Can you forgive me?" she continued, in a pleading voice; "never shall you again complain of me."

"I have not complained, dearest, have I?" he asked, chidingly.

"No, you have not; but I have well deserved it."

"And you will give up your carriage?" asked Harry.

"Willingly; coachman, waiter, and all."

"No matter about the waiter now," returned Harry. "It will not do to make so many changes at once; besides, it may not be necessary."

"Harry," said Ellen, a deep blush suffusing her cheeks, "I am not the weak girl you have reason to think me; for although, I confess, my love of display and dress has led me into folly, still, I love you and your interests far better, if you can credit an assertion so at variance with my late heedlessness." The timid, imploring manner with which she said these words, so won upon his love, that Harry felt happier than he had long been; for he had feared that the knowledge of his position would wean from him the heart of her he had so long cherished.

Ellen saw the change in his manner as he wound his arms about her, and pressed her to his heart; and feeling now secure of her position, returned more boldly to the subject. "Harry," she said, "tell me everything; henceforth I must share all your distresses."

"My distresses are all over," he replied; "for nothing can trouble me while you are true to yourself. I feared I had overvalued you, but I was wrong; and now we shall be one again in mind and spirit, shall we?"

"Yes, and forever," said Ellen; "so begin now, and tell me just exactly the state of affairs. You don't know how much is in a wife's power, which you shall, however, one day confess."

Thus entreated, Harry now stated to her the difficulties and perplexities of his situation. Business, to be sure, he had, but it did not seem to pay; at least, it did not pay sufficiently to support the style in which they had been living. Already he had been obliged to draw upon the small sum he had placed at interest. "However, with the changes he had mentioned, he hoped all would be right. He certainly was willing to work night and day, and should exert himself with renewed energy."

But Ellen was not quite so satisfied that the "changes" he had proposed were all that was necessary; and as soon as he left her, she went up stairs, and at once dismissed the sempstress she had engaged to do the trifling work of the family, which in most households generally devolves upon the mistress; and seating herself at the basket, soon became so much interested in her occupation, and plans of further economy, that when she was summoned to dinner, and Harry asked her how she had managed to get rid of the morning, without her customary ride, she laughingly acknowledged, "she had never once thought of it."

Harry was pleased, and Ellen too; for she thought that perhaps, after all, she was not *quite* so fond of display as she had supposed; for certainly she could have no "greater trial than to give up her carriage," yet she had "scarcely minded it at all!"

CHAPTER SIXTH.

"WHAT a lucky dog Frank Clifford is!" said William Chauncey to a young friend, as they walked by one of the handsomest residences in the city. "Mrs. Gray's death, two months ago, not only left him in possession of this fine house, with its splendid furniture, but bank stock enough to sport all the elegancies of a fine gentleman for the rest of his days; while I have to work away like a slave, to get a little miserable business, which, after it comes, brings more worry with it than it is worth."

"Mr. Gray intends to leave his property to Frank, too, does he not?" asked his companion, gazing admiringly upon the rich drapery of the windows.

"So I hear; and rumor says Mr. Clifford is going to do the same; so Frank bids fair one day to head the list of our millionaires."

"The heart knoweth its own bitterness," and each dwelling, we may add, its own sorrow. As the young men passed on, happy in all but the wealth they coveted, a sad scene was being enacted in the elegant chamber from the windows of which they had just turned their admiring gaze.

The lovely babe, the joy and pride of the household, there lay in the agonies of death! Of what use now was all its parents' wealth? True, the room was well supplied with physicians, with nurses, and

with friends; but this very fact had prevented Frank from procuring the aid which, in humbler and more private circumstances, he would so gladly have sought. Long had he inclined to the Homœopathic treatment of the sick; but fashion, and the fear of his father's anger, had restrained him from the expression of his opinions; and not until this cherished child seemed passing from his sight, did he gather strength sufficient to announce his faith, and send a hasty summons to Dr. Harris.

Coldly the retiring physicians of the old school bowed, and left the house; their hearts filled more with anger because the agonised parent elsewhere sought the succor they could not give, than with sorrow that they had failed to relieve the cherished child. Hardened men, who thought more of a favorite phase of science than of life itself!

But Frank heeded them not, as he anxiously paced the room in expectation of Dr. Harris' arrival. Hope had once more revived in his breast, as he recalled the many recoveries he had heard of, both in Philadelphia and in Paris; so that, when the aged man arrived, he advanced hopefully to meet him, saying, "Thank you for coming so quickly, doctor. The poor child suffers dreadfully."

"What is the matter?" asked the doctor.

"Croup. He was attacked the night before last. Do you think you can save him?"

"Most probably; we seldom lose a case, if called in time." But as the doctor leaned over the suffering child, his hopeful smile faded away; and turning to the father, he said, "It is too late; he is going now."

Poor Frank! with what self-reproach did he gaze upon the lifeless form, lately so full of intelligence and bright promise! What a fearful price had he paid for his indecision of character, and the abandonment of his profession, which, had he pursued, would at least have confirmed his faith in the one system or the other, and thus spared him the inquietude of conflicting opinions. Faint glimpses of his error flashed upon his mind; and he was almost tempted to retrace his steps, renew his studies, and stand boldly up in the defence of progress. But present cares and duties claimed his attention, and these rich seeds of thought were thus "choked up and fruitless." Is it not too often the case, that the warning voices which speak to us in the chamber of death, are silenced by the loud clamor of the world's customs and ceremonies?

And where was Susan all this time? As, instead of the mournful but happy privilege of the poor, who breathe their last upon a mother's breast, this little creature had sunk to his rest in the arms of another; so, too, instead of the mother's gentle touch in arraying its simple robe of white, other hands were busied with the form, putting even the rose-buds in its little cold fingers; and others, too, sat by it through the silent watches of the night. She whom kind nature intended to perform these sad offices, who would have received consolation, and imbibed pure thoughts of her angel child, as she wound her fond arms around the lifeless clay, and imprinted her last warm kiss upon its cold lips, had been so deprived, by the enervating influence of artificial life, of fortitude and self-sustaining power, that she had been borne fainting to her chamber, upon the first approach of danger;

where, surrounded by friends, and tended with care, she passed the hours that might have been so blessed with good. Alas! that wealth should be so misused and misconceived as to render its possessors incapable of their highest privileges.

Are afflictions sent us without a purpose? He who neglects a warning voice, must hear it again in louder tones!

CHAPTER SEVENTH.

A FUNERAL procession, with its sable trappings of woe, fills the spectator with a solemn awe, and instinctively the pace is slackened, and the head is bowed. But are the mourners *always* mourning?

Susan was thought too sensitive to follow her little one to its resting-place; but all their friends were punctual in their attendance, and all looked sorrowful and sad. Frank, however, could not help feeling that he was a man of mark, as he saw the long line of carriages drawn up before his door; and during the ride to Mount Auburn, many thoughts were in his mind, besides those connected with the lifeless form before him; while Mr. Clifford, who followed after, felt equal pride in the pomp displayed, although it was mingled with keen disappointment and regret, for the child had borne his name, and he had looked upon him as the future upholder of his house and fortunes; but now that he was gone, who could ever supply his place? Another child the parents would

never, perhaps, name after him. Thus would one generation at least pass by, without a bearer of this so highly prized title. But gradually his thoughts reverted to his daughters, and ideas of adoption flashed across his mind, and involuntarily he turned to look upon the carriage following. It should have been Ellen's; and his surprise was great, as he noticed in its stead a hired though handsome equipage.

Little cause had Ellen for self-praise that morning. It was the first public occasion that she had had for the use of her carriage, and she found her trial great. Yet her affection for Harry enabled her to conceal it, at least from him. But when Mary offered to take a seat with her, her burning blush could not be controlled; and when they advanced to the carriage, and Mary suddenly drew back, saying, "This is not yours," she was struck with the tremulous tone in which Ellen whispered her to enter. And during the ride, her thoughts, it must be confessed, dwelt oftener upon this strange circumstance, and Ellen's evident chagrin, than upon the solemn rite they were going to witness.

Mr. Gray, the next in blood and friendship, followed after. Sickness had robbed him of his strength, had whitened his hairs, and bowed his head; but at the same time it had taught him many truths that the hasty traveller upon the highway of life passes by unheeded and neglected. No sorrow, therefore, filled his heart for the little one. "Speed thee, sweet cherub, in thy Heavenward flight!" had been his whispered salutation and farewell.

And thus is it ever with those who listen to the lessons of wisdom taught by observation and experience. Death to them appears no longer as a spectre to be dreaded, but as a kind angel, opening wide the gates of eternity, and guiding to a haven of rest! Who that takes this view can weep for a stainless infant?

CHAPTER EIGHTH.

"LET Religion take full possession of the soul, and it will be found to actuate all its movements, and direct all its powers. There will be no violent efforts, no stiffness, no awkwardness; all will be natural and easy. An unseen and gentle influence will pervade the whole mind, and regulate the whole conduct; and thus the creature will gradually become conformed to the image of his Creator. This is perfect religion," says an eminent divine. And this was the religion possessed and taught by Frederick. No wonder, then, that the congregation and vestry were unanimous in their wish to call him as pastor to their church, when the death of Mr. Murphy, in the latter part of the winter, rendered such a proceeding possible.

But the gray-haired members and responsible vestrymen were not accustomed to such hasty

decisions; and although they had really made up their own minds, and were delighted with Frederick, they were yet astonished that others should have done the same, and now deemed it better to pause awhile and try him a little longer. He was too young a man to be faultless, and they would like time to find out his failings. And so they put their heads together, and finally discovered that his sermons were hardly doctrinal enough. And, in fact, the more they discussed the matter, the more they were surprised to find how difficult it was to decide what class of doctrines he really believed; for while some affirmed, without a doubt, that he was a Calvinist, others began to fear that he was almost, if not quite, an Arminian; and so he was one day asked, as if by accident, "What system of Theology he considered himself as teaching?"

"None," answered the youthful apostle; "I teach the *Bible*, and in all its phases."

This was indeed a startling answer. Was it not almost open heresy? so the vestry thought; and many consultations were held, and many plans discussed by which to bring his views to light.

It is a well-known fact that nothing in a congregation can ever be kept a secret, however low the whisper, and strict the injunction; and so Frederick, although, of course, supposed to be in the dark, had from the very first been fully enlightened upon the subject of his call, and had been well pleased at the compliment. This, then, was to be his sphere of action. How delightful in every respect! and how very flattering!

Mrs. Harvey, too, looked forward gratefully to a

smooth termination of her hitherto troublous life. While Mary's heart leaped with gladness; she would be so near to Ellen, and to poor Susan, who needed her so sadly; and she would have so many opportunities for doing good; and above all, Frederick would be happy and satisfied. Truly, the "lines had fallen to them in pleasant places!"

But the days passed by, and the call had not been presented. What could have caused the delay? Even the congregation wondered, for the vestry had kept their own counsel; while Frederick became nervous and agitated; every ring at the door startled him. He could not write that week; and his sermon on Sunday was accordingly pronounced unequal to his usual efforts. Mortified and vexed, he sought his study; and late in the night might have been seen wrestling in prayer for the mastery over his carnal mind.

And the morrow found him a changed man. The call was no longer thought of; but to know and do the will of God. Neither did the entrance of the chairman of the vestry, a known friend to Frederick, excite more than a passing emotion.

Mr. Harper proved, indeed, the bearer of an invitation, but merely to preach a course of sermons, and not, as was expected, to fill the vacant pulpit. But the sting had lost its venom, and Frederick conversed calmly and collectedly concerning the course.

"The older part of the congregation," Mr. Harper said, "thought it would be a good opportunity to have the younger members instructed upon the doctrinal points of belief before they engaged a

settled pastor, who would wish, of course, the privilege of selecting his own subjects."

Frederick was not deceived by this shallow pretence, and merely bowed in answer.

"We call ourselves," continued Mr. Harper, "a Calvinistic people; but we have been concerned to find of late many conflicting opinions spreading among us, which we would now like settled more definitely."

"What are the points in question?" asked Frederick.

Mr. Harper hesitated for a moment, cleared his throat, and then said, "There are four points which we have selected for the course: Predestination, or the doctrine of Election, Particular Redemption, Irresistible Grace, and Justification by Faith, to be delivered in as many sermons as you may judge advisable."

"And these points," said Frederick, "you wish clearly defined, I suppose, and proved by Scripture?"

"Yes, that is just our wish; and we should be glad if you could possibly be prepared to commence the course upon the ensuing Sabbath."

"It would be an easy matter," returned Frederick; "doctrinal sermons require much less time for preparation than the more practical."

Mr. Harper looked puzzled; he had always supposed a doctrinal sermon to be a matter of grave research and serious consideration. He was not aware how much technical terms and cant phrases tend to compose what is commonly called "deep writing" by the unlearned and ignorant. However, he was pleased to find Frederick so willing, as he

supposed him, to comply with their request; and rising, said, "You will commence the course, then, upon the following Sabbath?"

"Why, no," said Frederick; "for although, as I have just said, it would be an easy matter, it would, nevertheless, be placing me in a false position, as the supporter of these particular doctrines; or in other words, in the light of a Calvinistic theologian, which I am not."

"But which we hoped to find you," said Mr. Harper.

"So I presumed, which is the cause of my so replying to you," said Frederick; "otherwise I should have given no reason for my refusal, as I do not care to discuss the subject."

"You surely cannot deny that these doctrines are contained in the Scriptures?"

"Certainly not; but the same can be said of the dogmas of almost every sect and school. There is not one that cannot be supported and defended by detached portions or verses of the Bible."

This was a view of the subject Mr. Harper had never before taken, and one which he was hardly prepared to refute. In fact, he could scarcely think Frederick meant exactly as he had said. "I hardly understand you," he therefore answered; "and yet I am anxious to do so, and still more anxious that we should agree, if possible; for I am particularly desirous that you should fill our pulpit. Yet I cannot but feel that in selecting a pastor, we should be particular that he should hold the same belief which we, as a congregation, entertain. Excuse me, therefore, for the liberty I take in begging, as a friend, that you

would let me know what system of theology you do support?"

"I have already answered the question to others of the congregation," said Frederick; "but not very satisfactorily, I suspect. I teach the Bible *simply* as I find it, without any respect whatever to schools or systems."

"That is what all profess to do," said Mr. Harper.

"If they act up to their profession, then," said Frederick, "they act wisely; and with such I agree most heartily."

"Perhaps, then, it is only in *name* that we disagree," returned Mr. Harper. "Let us discuss the matter a little, and see if such is not the case."

"I fear it will be a useless waste of words," said Frederick, shaking his head, "as most discussions usually are."

"Why so? From sermons I have heard you preach, I am almost sure you agree with us more than you are aware of. Take the doctrine of Election, for instance; you will surely allow that it is expressly taught in the epistles both to the Romans and Ephesians?"

"Certainly; and yet I would never select it as a subject for an especial discourse, when there is so much more profit and pleasure to be derived from dwelling upon the great goodness and loving-kindness of God to *all mankind* — a truth contained not only in repeated asseverations and promises in the Bible, but which is felt and acknowledged by each of us, in our daily and hourly experience."

"That is a mere matter of taste, which we will not quarrel about," said Mr. Harper, who seemed

determined to surmount all difficulties. "If you believe what we do, that is all we ask; so upon that point we are agreed, as I supposed we would be. Now, as to Justification by Faith, what can be more explicit than the declaration of St. Paul, that 'A man is justified by faith *without* the deeds of the law,' and 'that to him that *worketh not*, but believeth in Him that *justifieth the ungodly*, his faith is counted for righteousness'?"

"Nothing," said Frederick. "St. Paul undoubtedly teaches it as the one leading doctrine of the Bible."

"What objection can you have, then, to preaching it?"

"None whatever, when the text or occasion requires it; and yet, on the other hand, I would quite as soon preach from St. James, that '*by works* a man is justified, and *not* by faith;' which you will allow would greatly astonish many of the members of your church."

Mr. Harper was staggered for an instant. He could not deny that such was the fact, yet neither could he deny the force of the passage quoted by Frederick. "I confess," he at length said, "that I do not understand these niceties of theologians, and cannot therefore dispute the matter with you; but I am convinced that there are arguments which those more learned than myself could bring up against you; for how many wise and experienced Christians have supported our view of the subject!"

"True," said Frederick; "but we must not forget the command of Christ, that we should 'search the Scriptures' for ourselves, 'lest the blind leading the

blind cause both to fall into error.' The great fault of Christians at the present time, in my opinion, is their blind adherence to established forms and creeds, together with their circumscribed belief in the Bible. We are told expressly "that we must diminish *naught* from the words of Holy Writ, that we may keep the commandments of the Lord our God;' and yet is this not necessarily the practice of all who support one set of doctrines at the expense of opposing ones? Truly we have need to cry, 'Lord, help thou mine unbelief.'"

"What!" exclaimed Mr. Harper, "you surely do not expect men to believe doctrines entirely at variance with each other?"

"If we believe the Bible," returned Frederick, "we must believe all that it contains. Because we find it difficult to reconcile the saying of St. Paul with that of St. James, are we to denounce either of them? Who made us to judge? Rather let us attribute their apparent inconsistency to our own weakness of vision; for 'now we see through a glass darkly.' Or, perhaps, it would be better still to remember that the Apostles were men like ourselves, influenced by like passions and infirmities; and, therefore, their writings should be considered according to the circumstances under which they were composed, according to the natural temperaments and dispositions of the writers, and according to the peculiar exigencies of the times; and because one may particularly delight in one promise or one truth, and thus dwell constantly and fondly upon it, is no reason that it must necessarily have the same prominence in the minds of all. Even as 'the wheels of

machinery often turn in opposite directions while tending to the same result,' so do these seemingly opposite doctrines tend equally to man's salvation."

"What you say certainly appears very true and just," said Mr. Harper; "and yet it is rather a singular position to take, that doctrines entirely at variance can equally be true. With such views, I cannot see that a man believes any thing."

"Why so? the peculiar excellency of the Bible consists in the practical and moral lessons it inculcates; and it is with these that we principally have to do. Controverted points of doctrine are not vital: why, therefore, make them of such importance? why for them 'omit the weightier matters of the Law, judgment, mercy, and faith?' What profit is it that we *dispute* of faith, if we have it not? or of works, if we *do* them not? or of either, if we have not charity? 'Though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains,' saith St. Paul, 'and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.'" Frederick paused for a moment, and then continued. "There are two commandments broad enough to embrace the whole field of Theology, and yet simple enough for a child to understand; and these it is my constant endeavor to teach and practise: 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind;' and 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

Mr. Harper (as is the case with most laymen,) had come prepared only to defend his own peculiar

views; but finding that this was not necessary, and feeling himself unequal to continue the conversation which had taken so singular a turn, now rose to depart. "I cannot object to what you have said," he observed, "yet I cannot say that I either fully understand or agree with you. It certainly requires consideration; although, for my own part, I would willingly shut my eyes to all that appears strange in your discourse, and believe, as I have before said, that it is more in *name* than in reality that we differ. But it is necessary to hear the opinion of others upon the subject, before whom I will endeavor to do justice to your views. The only difference between us appears to me to be in your believing *more* than we do, which we ought certainly not to object to, I suppose," he said, smiling.

But in this Mr. Harper was mistaken; for when the substance of the above remarks was reported to the assembled vestry, they all as with one accord gave utterance to the opinion, "that a minister who supported no particular class of doctrines, and belonged to no particular school of theology, but dared to believe and teach the *whole* Bible, without partiality, was not competent to fill his high office, and must not be tolerated."

The call, therefore, was not presented; and Frederick once more sunk into neglect and obscurity. But his meteor light was not put out, though hidden from their sight; for while they wandered on in darkness and error, he was basking in the beams of Divine love, and drinking deep draughts from the fountain of Divine wisdom.

CHAPTER TENTH.

Mr. Clifford's mortification and anger could not be concealed, when he was informed of the result of Frederick's "ridiculous behavior," as he angrily termed it; and again turning with the tide of public opinion, he determined never more to countenance, even by his favor, any future attempt of such a "sick-brained enthusiast."

In Ellen, too, he had been disappointed; for although she still maintained her position in the public admiration and esteem, he could not but see that she was gradually retiring from its view, and lessening rather than increasing the style of her establishment. The giving up of her carriage had deeply vexed him; for notwithstanding the fair excuses that had covered it, he too well knew the tastes of his daughter to believe that such trivial reasons could have induced the sacrifice.

Frank, truly, seemed the only child destined to add honor to his name and house; and he, too, had been sorely tried, first in the death of his son and heir, and now in the increasing ill health of his wife. With a morbid sensibility Susan clung to the memory of her child, reading a memento of him in every room and article in her house; and so Frank had been advised to change both the scene and climate, and early in the spring had departed for New Haven,

where many of her mother's relatives and friends resided, with the intention of spending the summer.

Thus had Mr. Clifford necessarily become more dependent upon Ellen than hitherto, and consequently exacted much of her time and attention. But this, in the perplexing state of their affairs, was a most trying annoyance to both Harry and herself; for every change, even the slightest, in their domestic habits, had thus to be commented upon and explained, so that at last it became very evident that no further reduction of their expenditures could be indulged in, without an immediate exposure of their embarrassments.

Harry bore the interference for some time with patience, for he loved Ellen too much to distress her by complaints; but at length, finding that it increased the more that it was allowed, and that, notwithstanding all the exertions that he made, he could not possibly continue his present style of living, he proposed one day to Ellen that they should remove to Baton Rouge, (whence Judge Coleman had again and again written to entreat him to return, repeating his offer of forming a partnership,) and thus avoid the difficulties that were gathering around them.

Ellen willingly consented; for she was tired of the surveillance of her father, and dreaded also lest her friends and acquaintance should be informed of their situation.

A move, to the young, is a slight and easy matter; it is the old and experienced only, who look upon it with fear and distrust. One evening, therefore, sufficed for them to talk the matter over, and form their plans; and the next morning found Ellen busy

in her preparations. She had not, however, accomplished much, when Harry returned from his office, and handing her a letter, said, "Our dream is at an end."

The letter was from Judge Coleman, containing an account of the sudden engagement and marriage of Blanche to Edward Leslie. "A happy thing for me," wrote the judge; "for as I have given up all hope of your ever living near me again, I have insisted upon their taking up their residence with me for the present, and of Mr. Leslie's opening the office I have so often proposed to you."

This was indeed a blow, for the very fact of having determined upon a change, seemed to make their present situation more annoying than ever; and now the question was not as formerly, "Shall we go to Baton Rouge, in preference to remaining here?" but "Where shall we go? for staying here is impossible."

Thus do important movements, affecting our whole after life, oftentimes originate in a first unpremeditated and natural step.

The young are fond of change—are sanguine and hopeful; and to Ellen, now that the idea of a move had taken possession of her mind, the thought of remaining stationary was most distasteful. Recklessly she proposed and discussed plan after plan, until at length New York seemed to her the goal of all her hopes. Her visits there to her aunt had been scenes of constant splendor and gaiety; and happy as she now was in her union with Harry, she could imagine nothing more delightful than to make it her permanent residence.

But Harry had tried the world, and experienced

too many of the rebuffs of fortune, to expect that all would now be sunshine and smiles; and very probably would have discarded the idea at once, and settled down more contentedly than ever to his business, had not Ellen so perseveringly urged him.

"It will be so delightful!" she said. "The opera every night, besides concerts, lectures, and parties. I wonder we never thought of it before!"

"Yes, but you must remember that in our case business is a necessary accompaniment to these amusements."

"Oh, you will have business enough as soon as you are known. I am not afraid of that."

"Thank you for the compliment. But how am I to become known? You forget what a city New York is, and what a number of lawyers are already there. It will require seven years at least, to obtain even a moderate amount of practice."

"Why, it didn't take the half of that time here."

"No, because I was already so well known, and had so many friends. Besides, a great many of my father's old clients brought their business back to me; but it will be very different in New York."

"But suppose you don't get business," said Ellen, persisting in her arguments, "you will have enough to live upon for some time, at least."

"How so?" asked Harry.

"Why you said the house would sell for a great deal, and so will the furniture."

A frown gathered upon Harry's brow. The house she spoke so lightly of, had been his father's; and although he had spoken of the sale, it had been merely as to its valuation, without any intention of parting with it. However, this was not the time for expla-

nation. Neither could he blame Ellen; and so he merely replied, "Even if I should sell the house, the interest would be but a mere pittance."

"The interest! Why not spend the principal? I am sure we can never want it more. Now that Mary is shut up at Roxbury, with her sewing and her troubles, and Susan and Frank have gone away, I utterly detest the place!"

Harry looked at her with astonishment; for he had not been aware, before, that she had any such feeling. Mr. Clifford's well-known ring, however, prevented his intended remonstrance, and imparted to his own countenance the expression of abhorrence he had just seen and condemned upon Ellen's. "What a bore!" he impatiently exclaimed, as the unwelcome visitor entered the room.

"*You* at home! and at this hour!" exclaimed Mr. Clifford. "Why what is the matter?"

Ellen's cheek burned as she saw the contraction of Harry's under lip, and as her father continued his questions, one after the other. Harry, however, preserved his politeness, if not his temper, until, having bid them good morning, he left for his office. "Yes," he said to himself, "we had better get rid of this impertinence, even at the expense of our comforts;" and so Ellen was pleased to find, upon his return home to dinner, that all objections to her plan had been overruled, and Harry quite as anxious for the move as she herself had been.

Their intention was of course soon noised abroad, the house and furniture offered for sale, and Harry's business brought to a close.

Thus was Mr. Clifford again disappointed and irritated; but his reproaches were so bitter and so constant, that Ellen became more desirous than ever of hastening her departure.

Their arrangements were, therefore, quickly made, Harry accepting at once of a handsome offer made to him by an English gentleman for his house and furniture, upon the condition that if sold again he should have the refusal of them. The deeds were also drawn up and brought home for Ellen's signature.

"Only one week more," he said, "and we shall be in New York, free and independent!"

But we know not what shall be upon the morrow. That very night the cry of "fire!" resounded through the streets; and although much of the drawing-room furniture, being upon the lower floor, was saved, the house itself was burned to the ground, and Ellen compelled to seek a shelter beneath her father's roof.

The insurance policy had expired the week before; and as the property was so soon to pass from his hands, Harry had not deemed it necessary to renew it; and so his loss was a complete and heavy one. How was he now to live in New York? He did not know; but he felt that it was now too late to retract. His business relations had been dissolved, Ellen's parents angered, and their friends and acquaintances in general hurt and provoked. Go *they must!*

CHAPTER ELEVENTH.

It was the holy hour of a Sabbath eve; Harry and Ellen were sitting at an open window. There had just fallen a beautiful and refreshing shower, and all Nature looked thankfully to her God; while the rainbow of Mercy encircled the firmament. It was a beautiful and solemn scene, telling of the wonderful goodness of our Maker — an hour that should strengthen men's hearts, filling them with trust and thanksgivings. But was it thus that they were affected? did *they* claim the promise of that bow? did *they* unite in the universal hymn of praise? No; they were deaf to the "still small voice" which whispered to them in the garb of Nature's beauty, and were busily scheming how and when they should bask in the garish sunlight of the world's fictitious splendor.

"But, Harry," said Ellen, "I am ashamed to stay here any longer; papa and mamma are tired of us."

"I know it; but how can we go? I have not a half-dollar in my pocket. I never doubted but that I should sell my lot and furniture with ease. To be sure, I have sold the latter, but for notes, which are of no present use."

"What, then, are we to do? we may as well determine upon something. There is no more pros-

pect of our going the next week than this, and we certainly cannot stay here much longer."

At this moment Mr. Clifford entered.

"Are you still determined to go to New York?" he asked.

"I am, sir."

"And when do you leave?"

"On Tuesday, sir."

"Why you haven't sold your lot yet, you told me."

"If I don't sell it to-morrow, I shall leave it unsold."

"It seems to me that you are foolish to be in such a hurry."

"Oh, it is time we were there; the warm weather is coming on, and I am anxious to be settled."

"I am sorry, for we should be glad to have you stay with us some time longer."

"Thank you, sir. But I think we must go on Tuesday."

"Harry," exclaimed Ellen, as Mr. Clifford left the room, "how could you tell papa so positively, that we were going on Tuesday?"

"Because I *must* go. I want to get to my books again. I feel that I shall be a happier man, when I am once more in business."

"But *how* are you going? where are the means?"

"I don't know, I will see what can be done to-morrow; sell the lot to whoever will give me the most cash; and that, with what we get for the carriage, which we have yet to dispose of, must take us there for the present," said Harry, as he rose and paced the room.

Ellen's diary, which lies open before us, gives such a particular and feeling account of their new experiences, that a few extracts may not be ill-timed.

"BOSTON, *May 8th.*—What a world we live in! Harry was up almost before the day, but has accomplished nothing; and now says that papa is so inquisitive about his plans and arrangements, that he is afraid he shall not be able to keep his temper, if we stay here much longer, so that we had better leave at once; he to remove to his brother Charles', where he will remain until he completes his arrangements; and I to accompany some friends, to-morrow morning, to New Haven, and stay with Frank and Susan until Friday, when I must meet him at the depôt, on his way to New York. How little do friends imagine our situation!

"NEW HAVEN, *May 9th.*—My first waking thought this morning was of our separation, the first since our marriage! It seemed doubly hard in the midst of so much perplexity, but it could not be helped, and so we parted; Harry strong and confident in his manhood, I, trustful in my dependence. But what a day it has been to my heavy, burdened heart, obliged as I have been to wear a merry, cheerful face! I speak constantly of going on Friday. It is like "whistling to keep my courage up," for my heart almost stops when I think of the *weeks* that may be between us and the goal of our hopes. And Harry! how much I have thought of him, and wished I could have remained with him. It will be so hard for him to write me of the disappointment of his plans! I

almost dread to-morrow evening, and the letter it will bring.

"*May 10th.*—The evening has come, and with it the promised letter. As I opened it, a bill of $50 fell upon the floor! Harry writes that he has sold both the carriage and the lot; but I must remember we are not "over affluent." He has sent the inclosed to defray any "unforeseen expenses" I may have incurred.

"*May 11th.*—Harry arrived this morning, as agreed; but Frank insisted upon his remaining for the night. Soon after his arrival, as we were alone in the parlor, the following conversation took place; which, as it has sunk deep into my heart, I will transcribe.

"'You have received my letter, then?' asked Harry.

"'Yes, and many thanks for your munificence. But I have grown too wise of late to spend carelessly, so I have your bill still unbroken.'

"Silence—

"'So you have sold the lot?' said I.

"'Yes,' taking up a newspaper.

"After a pause, I again spoke. 'And the carriage too?'

"'Yes.'

"And this was all! I fancy now that things are prosperous, no sympathy needed, no *suffering* to share. The wife who, in adversity's hour, has lent the willing ear to the relation of doubt and trial, must now resume her old, her fitting place. "A

woman has nothing to do with business," is man's convenient motto when all goes well; and so I must keep back the bubbling fountains of my heart, that long to gush forth in questions, in wonder, in delight, and to tell how happy I am. Am? *was* were better, for I am grieved. I have rejoiced even in the midst of tribulation, for many times a whisper has reached my heart, that it was for *good*. The ice was now broken. I knew everything of our affairs — I would *always* know everything!

"*May 12th.*—Found us seated in the cars for New York. Harry turned to me, saying, 'If I only had money enough, I would be perfectly happy.'

"'Do you know you have not told me a word of your business,' said I, 'or how much you have?'

"'Don't talk about such things in the cars, every one will hear you.'

"'You spoke first, Harry; I was very careful not to ask you.'

"'You know what I mean. I shall tell you every thing in the proper place, but not here.'

"I felt this to be a little singular. I fancied it a *ruse de guerre*, and my heart shrank within itself, fearful. Still the present must be well supplied, and after all that was the chief consideration; so we rode on, light-hearted and happy, until, at length, I grew resolute.

"'Harry, I *will* know what you got for the carriage; was it cash?'

"'Yes.'

"'How much?'

"'$——.'

"'Only that!' I exclaimed, in astonisment.

"'Yes, it couldn't be helped. Better that than nothing.'

"'How much did you get for the lot?' I now ventured to ask.

"'Wait until we are alone; I don't like to speak of my affairs in the cars.'

"'You don't want to tell me, that's all."

"A laugh.

"'Do, Harry, tell me. How much did you get?'

"'$ ——.'

"'Why that is $100 less than the other man offered.'

"'I know it. But the security is worth that; besides, the other man could pay nothing at present.'

"'How much did you get in cash?'

"'Don't ask me,' said Harry, covering his face and laughing.

"'Harry, do?'

"'Oh, I can't,' still laughing.

"'Now don't be foolish; tell me, do?'

"'Guess.'

"I thought I would guess very low, and give him the pleasure of adding at least $300; so I said '$200?'

"He nodded 'yes,' his hands over his face, and he laughing.

"'Oh, you are plaguing me,' said I; 'I know better. How much was it?'

"But it was true; the $200 was all. Only $400 to start in life with! My head and heart both ached, but I would not let Harry see it; and after a short time was as happy and hopeful as ever. $400 would pay our expenses, if we were careful, 'certainly three

months,' Harry said, by which time our purses will in all probability be replenished. Arrived in New York, we came to this Hotel. It is the best I have ever been in; but the expense of every thing is constantly before me. However, I will try to be cheerful, and not let Harry see my anxiety; he would think it so foolish."

"*May* 13*th.*—This afternoon Harry said, 'Now I am going to make you my banker.'

"My heart was joyful—I had grievously wronged him. He did indeed place confidence in me! I held out my hand, he gave me his *all.* My astonishment was beyond measure. It was too sublimely ridiculous even to grieve about; $90! which, added to the $50 I still had, made $140! Yes, this is our all, our fortune!

"Harry laughed, and I questioned. The rest had all been paid out for bills, some of which had occurred to him at the very last moment. It was too late now for regrets, and Harry said 'we had better make the most of the present,' so we got ready and went shopping. A wrought shell comb I *must* have, for mine was broken in travelling, and so I have bought it. I need, too, a new straw bonnet, for it has been very dusty upon the railroad; but as I am determined to be prudent, I have contented myself with a new trimming only. When we returned to the Hotel we found several friends here, and have spent a delightful evening. But I am very tired, so will postpone particulars until to-morrow."

May 14*th.*—All night I have tossed upon my bed.

How selfish in me to have bought the comb! and how indulgent in Harry not to tell me so! Only $140! I had not fully realized it."

"*May 25th.*—Harry has gone to a political meeting, and left me in the parlor, with the injunction to be 'lively and piquante.' I knew this to be an impossibility; but to please him, I seemed to assent, and remained a half hour, doing my best. And now, as a kind of outlet to my feelings, resume the pen so long neglected, and confide to you, dear journal, our present situation and future prospects.

"We left the Hotel a day or two after our arrival, and removed to the private boarding-house we are now staying at. But what a different life it is from what I have been accustomed to! So unnatural and artificial! I shall never be reconciled to it, I fear; so entirely to sink my identity and individuality! Harry agrees with me that it is dreadful, but says we can make it useful, too, if we please. It will certainly teach me circumspection and discretion; but at what a sacrifice of healthful impulse and feeling! The boarders are, to be sure, ladies and gentlemen, and just as good, probably, as we are; but they, of course, feel the same restraint and necessity of caution that we do. So that, although our intercourse is agreeable and polite, there is no freshness, no warmth. In fact, it is neither *home* nor society, and I do detest it!"

"*May 26th.*—Harry's return last night prevented a continuation of our affairs. They are sad enough. In three weeks we shall be penniless! a fact that

stares me constantly in the face, although I try my best not to think of it. I need, too, and Harry needs, many comforts; so that every day is a penance day. The destruction of our wardrobe by the fire, although not complete, was great enough to put us to much inconvenience; for our newest things, being in bureaus, &c., were all destroyed; only my packed trunks of passée articles saved. I laugh sometimes, however, to see how much I make of the 'old rubbish.' But laugh as I may upon paper, smiles very rarely visit my cheek when Harry is absent, for I have much to trouble me. My head as well as heart aches terribly at times, but with no one to soothe or comfort; for Harry has opened an office, and is doing all he can to invite business. His books, &c., that he brought with him from Boston make quite a display; and he is as punctual and studious as possible, and so I know he ought to be. But it is very hard for me to be here so much alone. I cannot read, for my mind is too full of anxieties and cares; and I cannot sew, for I have not the proper materials; and I have not the heart for society."

"*May 27th.*—I thought this morning that I would exert myself and write some letters; and while thus engaged, Harry returned rather earlier than usual from his office.

"'Who have you been writing to?' he asked.

"'To Mary.'

"'May I see it?'

"I could not refuse, for I never refuse him any thing; and yet it is a great trial to have one's letters

read and commented upon. When he had but half read it, he exclaimed —

"'Oh, you must not send this; it is a blast from Pandemonium!'

"'I have no heart to write happily,' said I, in a choking voice.

"'Write about other things, then, and not of yourself.'

"'I don't know how to write to Mary and not tell her about myself. She has known every thing about me for years, and when I now write it is so natural to tell how I feel.'

"'You will feel better to-morrow.'

"How little can men judge of a woman's feelings and trials! Harry thinks that because he keeps up his spirits, I ought to do the same, forgetting how wretchedly I feel, and how little I have to draw off my thoughts from myself; while he is buoyed up by hope of business, and the efforts he makes to obtain it. He meets, too, with new characters every day, sees new sights, and hears new sounds; while I am shut up in the four walls of my one room as in a prison!"

"*May* 28*th*—I made a great effort, and wrote my letter over to Mary this morning, with which Harry was so well pleased, that this afternoon I sat down and wrote another to Susan. When Harry returned I showed it to him, being sure he would like it, for I happened to be particularly happy; his praise always makes me happy.

"Harry read it.

"'Oh! no, this will never do,' he said.

"'What is the objection to it?' I asked, with difficulty controlling my rising tears.

"'It is too high-flown and exaggerated. Write a plain statement only, of how and where you are.'

"A plain statement! how that *plain statement* would strike her! But I knew what he meant, and have written it. When he comes, he will pronounce judgment. All this is very trying to me, but I suppose will do my mind and temper both good; Harry, I know, does not mean to hurt me."

"*June* 2*d*.—I have been too miserable to write, or do anything but lie upon my bed; cannot even take the stitches necessary for my comfort; the 'grasshopper' is a burden to me. Harry does not, and cannot have the least idea of what I suffer. I am afraid he will think me very fretful. When I dressed for dinner to-day, he said—

"'Now do talk, and don't look so careworn; your face tells everything.'

"'But I have no heart to talk, and am all the time wondering how the others *can* be so light-hearted.'

"'Make the effort, and you will find you can appear just the same.'

"'Well, I will try my best.'

"And so I did; and consequently made remarks which Harry afterwards styled 'light and trivial.' So much for *forced* spirits!"

"*June* 3*d*.—Harry told me this morning, that I ought to be more careful, and control my feelings better. He forgets how little cause I have hitherto

had to do so, and how very hard it is to me; while he has travelled so much, and lived so long among strangers, that it has become a second nature to him. And yet, is it so? *Does* he control his temper? *does* he conceal his troubles and anxieties? Yes, from the world. But does he act thus to me? I begin to think not; for he is certainly very irritable and fault-finding, particularly after relieving his own mind by telling me of some new trial or disappointment, and frightening me almost to death. I fancy the matter stands thus:

"He is cheerful in public, but fretful and fault-finding in private. While I am absent-minded and dull in the former, and forbearing and eager to please in the latter. How different a man is from a woman! Ambition controls the one, while the heart governs the other!"

"*June* 17*th*.—Time has rolled on, but I have not had the heart to write; and I would not now live over, even in memory, the bitter thoughts that have lately wrung my soul. I have hope only in my God. I feel that it is his hand that is upon us; but it is a righteous retribution. In the hour of prosperity, we forgot the Giver of all good, and said to our souls, 'Eat, drink, and be merry.' We knew not that 'Pride cometh before a fall, and a haughty spirit before destruction.' I pray that these trials may be as purifying fires, which, while they consume the body, may give new life and vigor to our souls."

"*June* 18*th*.—Yesterday my soul was dark. My trust was gone, and I felt that death itself were better

than this weary, weary life. But Harry spent the last evening with me, and was so kind and so cheerful, that I have unconsciously imbibed his spirit. He is always pleasant when he has anything to look forward to. He has now turned to his pen, which, in the midst of so much political excitement, he thinks may prove a golden sceptre. He has written a fine article for one of the newspapers, upon which they have complimented him so highly, that he hopes after a few more offerings, they will engage him to supply their paper with occasional pieces, perhaps once or twice a week, which he could easily do, and which would be a great assistance to us. This is a most opportune thought; for I much fear that the note which is due to-morrow, and upon which Harry so confidently relies, will not be paid."

"*June* 22*d.*—The note, as I feared, has not been paid, although it is promised in a few days. If it should fail, we have no present resource but in Harry's pen, and that is only as a straw to a drowning man. But God is mighty and merciful! Will he give a stone, when his child supplicates for bread? Oh God, hear my prayer, and have mercy!"

"*June* 23*d.*—I am indeed happy! As we were leaving the breakfast-table this morning, letters arrived by the penny post, one of which was for me, from Uncle George Gray. I broke the seal as I entered my chamber, and beheld a draft for $——! a birthday present. Dear Uncle George! how kind he has always been to me! and in the very way, and at the very time, I most need his kindness. Harry

says it will allow him just the time he wants to settle his business with the newspapers. He is writing for several of them, so that we have no doubt but that some will employ him. The cloud begins to lift. Let me not forget to thank the Giver of all good, who has thus fulfilled his promise, 'To hear the cry of all who call upon him.' "

"*June 24th.* — I have been very busy to-day. When I was in Boston, I spent one whole morning making out a list for shopping, consisting of cambrics, edgings, &c. But our determination to leave the city caused me to postpone my purchases; and since our arrival here, it has not been the least of my disappointments, that I could not fulfil my intention. But when Uncle George's draft came, I thought I would take at least a small part of it for this purpose, and lay awake nearly the whole night, determining what I would buy. In the morning I told Harry I was going out to do a little shopping. He looked surprised, but said, 'Very well,' and asked how much money I wanted. I told him twenty dollars would do. He looked worried at first, and then laughed, and said he 'couldn't spare me the half of it.' This was a great disappointment; but I would not let Harry see it, and so waited until he was gone, and then had a hearty cry; for I thought it selfish and unkind in Harry. But better thoughts returned to me; and upon reflection, I acknowledged that it was all right. Harry *must* have it, and I *could* do without it some time longer. But then the tears rose again; I was *so* anxious to have at least *one* trifle made to look at occasionally, it would be such com-

pany for me. Then I suddenly remembered my 'packed trunks,' and the number of white gowns trimmed up the front with edgings, and numberless other matters, which would be 'treasures of untold wealth' to me; and busy enough have I been looking them over, and arranging them for use. How differently time will fly, now that I have occupation, and *such* occupation!"

"*June 25th.*—Every rose has its thorn. The draft that made me so happy, has given rise to many a pang. Yesterday, I thought Harry selfish and unkind; to-night he thinks me stingy and foolish. I happened unfortunately to allude to the first conversation we had about coming to New York, and the inducements I had urged for doing so, such as the opera, concerts, parties, &c.; whereas, since we came here, we have never been able to go even once, or in fact, to enjoy a single one of the pleasures I had pictured. Upon which Harry naturally enough proposed taking me to the opera this evening. But this I didn't wish to do. 'It would cost so much to buy our tickets, and hire a carriage to take us there and back.' But Harry said 'we could walk.' This was worse still; walk to an opera! I should be ashamed of myself; and then, too, I am not dressed fashionably enough. Everything I wear is a year old, even in Boston; so what would they be in New York? And so Harry was provoked, and said it was 'ridiculous nonsense,' and has taken his hat, and gone off, I suppose to the opera, by himself."

"*June 26th.*—Harry did not go to the opera last

night, as I supposed; but only took a walk to 'get cool,' and then returned home in the proper frame of mind to give me a long lecture upon my false pride, which prevents my enjoying even the few pleasures left us. He scolded me, too, for not having renewed my acquaintance in the city; and says it is a want of proper self-respect to imagine that mere external circumstances can affect my position or claims upon society. He cannot understand what a difference, however, it makes in me myself, in my appearance, behavior, and feelings. Who wants a badly dressed, low-spirited creature, at a party? No one, I say, has a right to intrude his dulness upon others; so I will wait for better times, before I will show my face among my old associates. I am not *above* the world, as Harry seems to think I ought to be; and neither am I *of* it, as I would like to be; so I will keep myself, for the present, as private as possible."

"*July* 3*d.*—A week has glided by, but so pleasantly that not a moment could be spared to my pen. My *work* is all-absorbing during the day, and Harry spends every evening with me. His *talk* has done me some good, for I now accept of every invitation to walk, to go to confectioners, or to picture-galleries (the few pleasures within our reach), which evidently pleases him. Neither do I tell him how wretchedly I feel, as I used to do, but let my head throb on, without a murmur; for what does it matter, if the *heart* beats happily? I begin to think, too, that a man, however much he may love you, cannot be

treated like a woman, as a sister, for example. Your little troubles are really *little* in their eyes, and *belittle* the grumbler.'

"*July 9th.* — Difficulties again menace us. The newspapers seem to be money-making, not money-paying affairs. Harry's project, therefore, has proved a failure. The editors were very glad to insert his pieces as gifts, but complain of a superabundance of material, now that he proposes an arrangement with them. So that all his labor has been to no purpose; and yet I should not say so, for he has not only been sustained by the hope of employment, but has had all the benefit of the exercise. It is, however, a great disappointment to him."

"*July 10th.* — Harry had such an attack of the blues last night, that I willingly consented to accompany him to the opera, which I enjoyed more than ever before, notwithstanding my *walk* there, and ancient attire, which, however, I found to be delightfully respectable, the real fashionables being out of town at this season of the year. The singing was delightful, and quite aroused my old love of music. But how is it to be gratified? This is indeed one of the crying evils of poverty; the absence of means to cultivate and indulge our choicest gifts and tastes. Music is so elevating in its influence, that every one who hears it must be both happier and better. This, at least, was the effect upon us last night. Harry said he was a different being; it charmed away all the anger he had unconsciously felt against the stingy editors, and gave him new life and hope."

"*July* 12*th.*—The prospect brightens. Harry has bethought himself of the Reviews; and as writing is mere pastime to him, says he will review a political work which has just appeared, and get it published if possible. I am sure he deserves to succeed, for he makes every effort. The evenings he will still give to me. We understand each other better than we did at first, and, I believe, love each other better, too. The mornings I devote to my work, which comes on famously. My embroidered handkerchiefs have been converted into the prettiest little —— imaginable. Who would suppose it? Tell it not in Gath!"

"*July* 18*th.*—Harry's article is finished, and does him infinite credit. It is just in time, too, for our purse is a very lean one. My health and spirits are, however, so much better, that it does not distress me much, for I now naturally hope for the best."

"*July* 19*th.*—Harry has offered his article for publication, and will receive an answer the day after to-morrow."

"*July* 20*th.*—The editors have been so busy, that they have not been able to examine the review, but will do so to-morrow. They forget that hope deferred maketh the heart sick. Harry, however, has no doubt of its acceptance, and I very little."

"*July* 24*th.*—Harry waited until to-day, so as to give the editors full time for the perusal of his article, and then went to their office. They were particularly polite (Harry says they are proverbially so when they

intend to refuse your request), and then told him they liked the piece very much, &c., but had really no room for political articles, as they had lately been overstocked with them, and advised him to take it elsewhere. But Harry says he is sick of the whole tribe; and so not absolutely to throw away his work, told them they were welcome to it, if they would publish it in their next number; which they, forgetting the objection they had just made to it, immediately accepted. So much for periodical literature; Harry washes his hands of it henceforth and forever. But how are we to live?"

"*July* 30*th.* — I have been quite sick; obliged to keep my bed for several days. But Harry has been so much with me, and so kind and attentive, that I would gladly live them over again. The boarders, too, have been very kind."

"*July* 31*st.* — I have sat up the whole morning, but not able to do any thing. My fingers ache to get at my work again. A peep, however, at my drawer comforts me, for it is getting quite full, and every thing so pretty."

"*August* 1*st.* — This being sick away from home, and in a boarding-house, is dreadful! But I try to keep up my spirits for Harry's sake. He has enough to trouble him; no business at all, and no prospect of any. What is to become of us is more than we can tell. Every thing is dark indeed."

'*August* 4*th.*—Dear uncle George! he has written

Harry such a kind letter, containing all manner of good wishes, by a Mr. Jones, a friend of his, who, it appears, has some business in the city, and to whom he begs that Harry will pay some attention. How gladly he would do so, but how little able! I must make it up, Harry says, with smiles and graces! But my poor smiles, I fear, have lost all their brightness."

"*August 5th.* — Mr. Jones spent the evening with us. He is very pleasant and intelligent. I exerted myself to the utmost, for which Harry afterwards rewarded me by saying I was 'quite brilliant.'"

"*August 6th.*—Joy! joy! Mr. Jones has employed Harry as his counsel. It is a very important case, which, Harry says, will excite much interest; so that it will bring him forward at once, and, perhaps, build him up a practice. Harry says he owes it all to me; but I think he owes it to uncle George, who probably introduced him for the express purpose."

"*August 9th.* — It is said 'troubles never come singly,' and so I believe it is with blessings. Yesterday Harry received payment of the note which was due a month ago, and Mr. Jones presented him with a retainer, so that things promise well."

"*September 12th.*—Mr. Jones' case was tried yesterday, and gained. Harry, I hear, has won golden opinions for himself."

"*September 17th.* — Harry has just received an

invitation to the annual dinner of the New Englander society. His success at the bar seems already to have been noised abroad."

"*September 20th.* — Harry has gone to the dinner. It will be a pleasant change to him, and will probably, he says, be the means of introducing him to a great many persons, through whom he may obtain much business. But, I confess, I feel very lonely, and begin to fear that an increase of business will cause a decrease of happiness; for I have grown so dependent upon Harry, that I cannot bear to have him away from me. I wonder if all wives love their husbands as I do him? I doubt it, for I should be miserable to be treated as I see many of them are. Sometimes I fear I am making an idol of Harry, and loving him too much. But how can that be? No, it is my duty, as well as pleasure; so I will love on, to the full extent of my capacity."

"*Sept. 21st.*—Harry's dinner was 'a glorious one,' particularly as they toasted him, being a stranger; which eliciting a speech, procured him many flattering compliments. I am pleased, but not surprised; for I know he *must* succeed, if once known."

"*Sept. 30th.* — I have just received a letter from Frederick, saying that 'the mother and child,' are both well. Dear Mary! how much I would like to see her, and her little one! Mrs. Harvey seems an invaluable mother to them. Why are not all mothers like her? How much my parents could do for me,

if they were inclined to! But papa has never forgiven our leaving Boston, and mamma always echoes his feelings."

"*Nov.* 12*th.*—Unto thee, O God, do I give thanks! for thou hast been with me in times of sickness and sorrow, and hast brought me up from the very borders of the grave. Thy name be praised! And I would thank thee for the precious boon thou hast bestowed upon me. Sweet innocent! may her first lispings be in prayer to thee, and her last breath be spent in thy praise and adoration. This day, my little Mary is a fortnight old."

"*Nov.* 16*th.*—I am sitting by my child, my heart full of gladness. But who can describe a mother's joy, or estimate her love? Tempting as my long-neglected pen is to me, I cannot keep my eyes from off her little face, and must once more take her in my arms."

"*Dec.* 12*th.*—How different men are from women! I cannot have enough of my sweet babe, and Harry *almost* calls her a nuisance; that is, he said if I continued so devoted to her, he *would* call her so. The idea! jealous of a babe! However, the case is plain; one or the other must give way. Now which shall it be? Speak, oh mother! with your full heart; and you, oh wife! trembling lest a shadow even come between thee and thy soul's idol. The low, earnest voice has gained the victory; and thou, sweet babe! must henceforth lie in nurse's arms!"

CHAPTER TWELFTH.

FIVE years have gone by, ringing the changes of the seasons, of summer and winter, of joys and sorrows, of life and death; and we now resume the thread of our story with a letter from Mary to Ellen:

"DEAR SISTER:—You ask me to write you exactly how it is I manage to get rid of old Time, in this 'dull little village of Roxbury.' I assure you, very pleasantly, as you shall see.

"You know what a methodical creature I am; so the history of one day will answer for that of the whole year. How often, in our girlish days (fond memories of which I often indulge in), you used to tell me that there certainly 'must be a clock wound up somewhere about my brain!' Well, Frederick fortunately has one, too, but his keeps rather better time; for often when I would willingly sleep on, he rises punctually with the sun, and betakes himself to his exercise, sawing the wood necessary for the day's fires; and then, if it be summer, working in our garden; or if it be winter, shovelling off the snow. After his departure, I confess I am often tempted to a 'little more slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep;' but my rebel children, inheriting their father's frailty, will not permit it, rousing me with their little loving ways, and sweet baby kisses, until

we get into a real frolic; so that I think myself very fortunate if we all get dressed before Kitty's summons to breakfast, which we call the children's meal, for they are always as merry as kittens. After breakfast, Frederick retires to his study, where he remains until dinner, writing sermons, lectures, or miscellaneous pieces, as the case may be. Very little encouragement, however, he gets; for the *odium theologicum* still clings to him. While he is thus occupied, I look a little after household affairs; attend to my own chamber, dust the parlor, etc., etc., and put baby to sleep; then, leaving the boys with dear, kind mother, I close my chamber-door, and commune with my own heart, and with my Maker. I find, dear sister, that the only way to preserve a spiritual life, is by a daily perusal of the Scriptures, and the strictest self-examination. The habit of some persons, to hurry over a chapter before leaving their room in the morning, and as they retire at night, I cannot believe does much good. I find with myself that it is very necessary to have an appointed hour, when I do not feel hurried by the fear of neglecting other duties. These are my *golden hours!* Household cares, and baby-playing, then keep me busy until dinner, which, by the way, is always good, for Kitty is an excellent cook; and that is a great matter in house-keeping, for however little we may have, if only bread and coffee, it is of the best, and always inviting.

"Now comes the afternoon, the first two hours of which Frederick devotes to the instruction of a half dozen boys he is preparing for College; four of whom pay very handsomely, while the other two embody his offerings to the poor—his charitable

mite; for we have little else but kind words and wishes to bestow. These same hours I spend in giving music-lessons to the daughters of some of our neighbors, which, hard as you would think it with your exquisite ear, is really a pleasure to me; for I feel that I am thus adding to the comfort of all whom I so dearly love. When these labors are over, Frederick and I, like freed birds, run away from all care, and ramble through the woods, as we were wont in younger days to do, recalling old times, discussing the present, and hoping bright things for the future.

"We always return in time to enable me to give my little ones their early supper and sing their nightly hymn; and then, gathered around the table, I take my work and ply the busy needle; while mother knits warm stockings, mits, and comforts, for us all; and Frederick reads aloud the choice literature of ages. I assure you we are a happy family. God has blessed us abundantly with health, contentment, and loving hearts; and, I trust, we are thankful.

"And now, dear sister, that I have complied with your request, is it too much to ask the same of you? Yet not the same, for New York is not a 'dull village,' and time cannot hang heavily. But how is it with the heart? the spirit? those germs of eternal life! Do not let your worldly comforts blind you to your soul's necessities.

"Frederick and mother send kind remembrances to Harry and yourself; and with many kisses to your little ones, and an especially warm one to my little namesake, I remain, as ever,

"Your loving sister,

"MARY."

As Ellen finished the letter, she buried her face, bathed in tears, in her hands; for many passages had touched a painful chord. But at that moment a quick tap at the door, and a pleasant "Good morning," announced Mr. Gray, who was upon a short visit to the city.

Little Mary, now a beautiful child five years old, sprang forward and admitted him; for she, too, had learned to love "uncle George."

"Hey day! what does this mean?" he asked, as Ellen rose to meet him, the traces of tears still visible upon her cheek.

"Only a letter from Mary," she answered.

But Mr. Gray was not satisfied; he did not like her tears. Mary's letter, merely as relating to herself, could not, he thought, have thus excited her; and as he had before suspected that she was not *quite* so happy as she evidently wished to appear, he determined that, if possible, he would discover what the difficulty was before leaving her. He, therefore, led her gradually to speak of herself, of Harry, and of their mode of life.

"Come," he said, "do tell me how you manage to live in these two rooms?"

Ellen, who had now recovered her composure, smiled. "One cannot imagine," she said, "the capabilities of a room until they enter a boarding-house. This fine parlor, for instance, is at night converted into a chamber; and this sofa we are sitting upon into a bed for nurse and Mary, while that closet contains their toilet and wardrobe; and that pretty looking divan in the corner is, in reality, only a box with a stuffed lid, answering the purpose *of a trunk.*"

"Well, I acknowledge, that is a contrivance I never should have thought of. And what becomes of Frank and George?"

"Oh, they sleep in cribs where I can see to them."

"But how do you get along in the morning? Harry must think it Bedlam!"

"Oh, no. Nurse and I get the children all dressed, and give them their breakfast, and have the room nicely arranged again as a parlor, before Harry even wakes; so that he hardly knows but what it is always a parlor."

"You must be up very early to accomplish so much before seven, which you have told me was your breakfast hour."

"*My* breakfast hour," said Ellen; "Harry never rises until nine. He is up, you know, so late at night," she added, observing Mr. Gray's look of surprise.

"Where, then, does he get his breakfast?"

"At an eating-saloon," said Ellen. "That is one of the evils of boarding; for of course I lose his society all that time; and so when he returns at noon, instead of a pleasant chat together at our own table, and with the children, we have to go down stairs, and take part in the generally stupid conversation of a boarding-house dinner; which occupies so much time, that Harry is obliged to go directly back to his office."

"He returns to supper, I suppose?"

"Why no," returned Ellen, with a slight blush; "tea is served so early here, that he would have no afternoon at all, so he takes that, too, at a saloon, and returns home about eight."

"And spends the remainder of the evening with you?"

"Yes, unless he has particular business, or there is some political meeting that he is anxious to attend."

"He sees, then, nothing of the children, and very little of you?"

"He cannot help it, you know," said Ellen, "for his business would suffer." Her trembling voice, however, spoke volumes to Mr. Gray, who, mentally exclaiming, "This, then, is the sore point," rose to take his leave.

"Here, Miss Mary, give me a kiss before I go, for I shall not see you again before to-morrow morning; when your mamma," he said, turning to Ellen, "must be all ready to take a walk with me."

As Mr. Gray left the house, many thoughts seemed revolving in his mind, for his countenance did not express its usually careless good humor; but with a grave and perplexed look he walked on, heedless of all around him, until, arriving apparently at some sudden determination, he crossed over into another street, and stopping an omnibus — the coach for the rich as well as the poor, for the busy as well as the idle—he rode to the office of a conveyancer who was well known to him.

Here he remained for some time in conversation, examination of papers, etc., occasionally taking notes; until at length, apparently satisfied, he rose, and accepting the offer of the nephew of his friend, to accompany him upon what appeared a business excursion, he once more called an omnibus, and disappeared from sight.

CHAPTER THIRTEENTH.

At the appointed hour the next day, as Mr. Gray called for Ellen, and found her prepared for the walk, the handsome mantilla she wore struck him for the first time as singular; for what he had formerly considered but natural and proper, and merely the indication of a refined and elegant taste, now that he had some misgivings of their circumstances, appeared an expensive and foolish ornament.

"Ellen," he said, "excuse my rudeness; but what did that mantilla cost?"

Ellen blushingly answered, "They generally cost between thirty and forty dollars. Mine, however, did not cost so much."

"That is hardly answering my question," returned Mr. Gray. "I asked how much yours cost, and for a particular reason."

"Well, then," said Ellen, laughing, "as you insist upon knowing, I made it myself."

"And worked all of that embroidery?"

"Yes; you know I was always fond of it."

"Humph! And that bonnet, too, I suppose you made."

"Why do you think so?" asked Ellen.

"Because you never would *buy* such a handsome one, if you would take the trouble to make the mantilla."

"It was really no trouble, Uncle George; I liked to do it."

"Well, well, but about the bonnet; you made that, too, did you not?"

"Yes, but that is nothing; a great many ladies make their own bonnets."

"And your fine talents are thus thrown away, while Harry dresses like a prince."

"Oh, uncle George! you must remember Harry's position. He is obliged to dress, he is so much in public. You must not think," she continued, interpreting Mr. Gray's look of vexation, "that Harry wishes me to do these things; he tells me not to, and objects very much to my sewing."

"But never gives you the money, I suppose, to buy the articles."

"Not such handsome ones, of course. But I know he likes to see me well dressed, and would give me the means if he could."

"That is, if he had *more* than he wanted himself."

"Oh, no, uncle George, you wrong him. Harry gives me every thing I ask for."

"Well, no matter; you are a good wife, as I always knew you would be, so come along."

Ellen was surprised to see him stop an omnibus. "I thought we were going for a walk," she said.

"Yes, but in a different part of the city."

They rode on pleasantly for some time, when Mr. Gray pulled the string, and alighting, turned into another street.

"This is —— Place," he said, "one of the most desirable situations, I am told, in the city."

"So I have heard," she said; "and they are really very fine residences."

"How do you like the one we are passing?"

"Very much, indeed."

"Ah! here is one just like it, and for rent or sale, too. Let us take a look through it."

It was, as it promised, an elegantly finished and convenient house. Ellen saw no fault in it, although Mr. Gray took particular pains to draw out her opinion concerning every part of it; but it was just completed, and not a shelf or closet could be improved.

"Come, come," said Mr. Gray, "we are spending our whole morning here, and there is a plenty to do."

Several other houses were now pointed out by Mr. Gray; but it was with evident satisfaction that he heard Ellen invariably give the preference to the first.

"But what interest do you take in these houses?" asked Ellen.

"All the interest in the world, for I intend to buy one of them."

"Buy one of them!" exclaimed Ellen; "for whom?"

"A friend of mine. But come, now let us go to the upholsterers, if you have time, for the house is to be furnished as well as bought."

But this matter of furnishing was no slight affair; and several days elapsed before the carpets were all selected and down, the curtains up, and chairs, sofas, piano, etc., etc., were in their proper place.

"Now," said Mr. Gray, as Ellen remarked that

all was complete, "let us move in to-morrow; I want to see you nicely settled before I leave."

Tears filled Ellen's eyes as the truth flashed upon her for the first time. That elegant house was to be her own!

"Here are the titles," said Mr. Gray, pulling out the papers that had been impatiently slumbering in his pocket. "It was the principal object of my visit here to discover in what way I could best invest a certain sum, intended as my last gift and legacy, for your joint benefit. Stop," he continued, as Ellen would have interrupted him, "I have more to say which it is necessary for you to hear. For reasons which you will hereafter be acquainted with, Harry and yourself will both be left out of my will. It was an ill-judged transaction which causes it. But that is past, and I have done my best to redeem it by curtailing my expenses in every way so as to accumulate this sum from my income; a course, I suspect, which has made me appear very unamiable at times to others. But you were dear children to me; and, though with much difficulty, I have at length accomplished my purpose. Have I judged correctly in my mode of investing it?"

Ellen's heart was full; and again and again she expressed her gratitude in the warmest terms.

"Indeed, Uncle George, I owe you everything. Life was a burden to me, shut up in those two rooms, without the means of entertaining company, and separated so much from Harry. But now all will be so different!"

And very different, indeed, it was. Ellen walked through her house with a statelier step, and a clearer

brow; while the abstracted look, and fitful sallies of wit, which had first excited Mr. Gray's apprehensions that "all was not well," gave place to constant smiles, and animated, cheerful converse; satisfactorily proving how great an influence external circumstances exercise upon both the character and appearance. It must, however, be confessed, that her anxieties and trials had left their impress upon her heart; for a slight shade of sadness, unseen yet felt, lingered around her, dulling the brightness of her girlish smile, and pervading her slightest tone. Yet even Harry thought it but added softness to the one, and a deeper thrill to the other.

One short month Mr. Gray remained to witness and partake of the happiness he had bestowed. Well lighted drawing-rooms, cheerful friends, and delightful music, were attractions far exceeding those of the office, and of public halls; and Ellen welcomed the return of Harry to her side, with a wife's tenderest emotion.

Fathers! mothers! uncles! why not bestow your wealth, or a portion of it, upon your intended heirs, while they are yet young, before the weariness of life has weighed upon them?

A few years more of care and suffering, and the estranged heart cannot be recalled, nor the worn spirit find peace!

CHAPTER FOURTEENTH.

"I AM so glad you have come, Uncle George," said Frank Clifford, as, descending from Susan's chamber, where Mr. Gray had been visiting her, the very first morning of his return to Boston, they entered the parlor, and seated themselves. "I need your advice very much."

"Upon what subject?" asked Mr. Gray.

"As to what physician I had better call in for Susan. Dr. Jones, our family physician, is himself in such miserable health, that he leaves the city to-morrow, to be absent some months. Now who shall I employ in his place?"

"What does Dr. Jones think of Susan?"

"He says she is now doing remarkably well, but that everything depends upon her having proper care and attendance. Now there is the difficulty; where are these to be procured?"

"You are a better judge in that matter than I," returned Mr. Gray, "having yourself been a student of the profession."

"There is just the difficult,y" said Frank. "If I had not studied it, I might perhaps have had some faith; but as it is, I doubt their whole practice."

"Ha! a little of your old heresy peeping out again. Your father, I fear, spoiled a fine doctor."

"If it were not so late to begin life anew," re-

turned Frank, bitterly, "I should be sadly tempted to redeem the past. I am so perplexed and worried when any one is sick, that half the pleasures of existence are destroyed."

"Why, then, do you not make up your mind, once for all, upon the subject?"

"Because it is so difficult where others are concerned. Were I sick myself, I would not hesitate a moment, I should always prefer Homœopathic treatment; but with Susan it is different. Every friend she has would rise up in arms against me; and I myself would be most miserable, if the result should prove unfavorable."

Before Mr. Gray could reply, the arrival of Dr. Jones upon his farewell visit to Susan, interrupted the conversation, leaving Frank, as usual, disappointed and unsatisfied. He felt, too, as he had often done before, that it was weak and unmanly in him thus to falter in the course that he believed to be right; thus to consult others upon a subject that should be, and was, so much better understood by himself. Susan's situation was one of deep interest to him, for once more they hoped for an heir to their fortunes and their name. Why, then, should he risk the lives so precious to him, by unfounded fears, and a weak compliance with the opinions of others? He was sensible of the power he was abusing, of the talents he had buried, of the opportunities he had neglected, and that his growing indecision of character was the fruit of misused wealth and leisure; for life is active, whether the tendency be to ripeness or decay, and Frank bowed his head in anguish before the just tribunal of conscience. He had said to Mr. Gray, that it

"was too late to redeem the past;" but the present, the future, were still subject to his control, and he determined to prove himself equal to the work before him. As soon, therefore, as Dr. Jones had departed, he sought the office of Dr. Harris, the Homœopathic physician formerly employed by him.

Dr. Harris, however, as the servant said, "had not yet returned from paying his morning visits, although he was momentarily expected. Would the gentleman walk in?"

Frank was disappointed, and turned to leave; when, fearful that his recent determination at once to engage the doctor's services might also depart, he accepted of the invitation given, and seated himself in the office.

Some time, however, elapsed before the doctor's return, thus giving him the opportunity he had so carefully tried to avoid, of reflecting once more upon the step he was about to take. Susan, he now considered, was nervous, very nervous, and had so little faith in this new system of medicine, that even if she were well she would be apt to imagine herself ill, and thus counteract the benefit she might otherwise receive. Her nurses, too, and friends, holding as they did the same sentiments, would probably, by strengthening her fears and increasing her anxiety, completely defeat the wished-for object. "At any rate," he at length thought, "I need not be so hasty." But as he rose to depart, the doctor entered.

"I am sorry to have kept you so long; they tell me you have been waiting some time."

"It has been of no consequence, sir," returned Frank, somewhat embarrassed. For what was now

to be done? retreat was out of the question, and he was not prepared for action.

"Is any one sick in your family?" asked the doctor.

"No, sir, or rather not very sick; Mrs. Clifford's health is never very good."

"I am sorry to hear it; she is too young to suffer so constantly."

Dr. Harris was a man of advanced years, and of large experience, with a remarkably fine countenance and kind, parental manner, to whom Frank had always felt an affinity. "Just such a man," he had often thought, "might I have been." His influence over him, therefore, whenever he was subjected to it, was very great, and upon this occasion proved irresistible; for Frank at once unfolded to him the difficulties of his situation.

The doctor listened in silence to the end, and then said, "Do not be discouraged; the force of habit and of education can never easily be overcome. They are the most powerful obstacles that Homœopathy has to struggle against. Yours is only one of the numerous instances that have fallen under my notice; and even after years of experience, there are many who doubt and tremble if the case is a critical one."

"That may all be very true and natural, but does not reach my weakness," said Frank; "for the force of my education inclined me decidedly to your mode of practice."

"Of your medical education, you mean," returned the doctor; "but I allude to the home influence. One must have a solid basis for his opinions, when

they run counter to those contracted in childhood. Nothing can be more difficult than to eradicate errors thus imbibed. Had you continued your studies and practised your profession, you would undoubtedly have acquired this basis. But situated as you have been, I am not at all surprised at the result."

"What, then, would you advise me to do?" asked Frank.

"Advice is always a dangerous medicine to administer," said the doctor, smiling, "even in Homœopathic doses; but as you appear to be so much in earnest, I will venture to ask why you do not make the subject your study for a time, at least until you are convinced which of the two systems is most worthy of confidence?"

"And may I become a student under you?"

"Most gladly, if you desire it."

This, then, was agreed upon; and Frank having also engaged his attendance upon Susan, departed happier and more satisfied than he had been for years.

But he had not calculated upon the opposition that awaited him. Susan was terrified at the danger to which, she thought, it exposed her own and the other life she held so dear, and implored him to relinquish his purpose; while Mr. Clifford thundered out his wrath, at the idea of a son of his so demeaning himself and family, as to become a believer in such "humbug and absurdity."

Under these circumstances, Frank once more yielded; for Susan was too delicate to be opposed, and his father too indulgent and too powerful to be

exasperated. His plan, therefore, must be delayed to a "more convenient season."

Dr. Harris accepted his excuses, for he was above the common feelings of rivalry and party spirit; and when Frank asked if he would render his services if eventually required, he answered, "At a moment's notice. Health is an inestimable blessing, and I do all in my power to promote it everywhere."

"In this respect, at least," thought Frank, "he has an undoubted superiority over the physicians of the old school; who become incensed, and frequently refuse to attend, where a Homœopathist has been employed."

Why, we ask, are they so averse to competition—to investigation? Can they not bear the test—the scrutiny?

CHAPTER FIFTEENTH.

Dr. Maxwell, the physician at length deemed worthy to attend upon Susan, pursued the same course of treatment as that which had been prescribed by Dr. Jones; which being considered by the family a proof of his ability, they soon became reconciled to the change. Susan was still advised to keep her chamber, and in fact her couch; to have nothing of an exciting nature told her; and altogether to be kept very quiet and inactive. But the mind, it is

well known, requires food; of which, when it is deprived, it turns back upon itself, preying upon its own resources until weakened and exhausted.

Such was the result with Susan. Treated in every respect as an invalid, she necessarily apprehended danger, and even death. With nothing external to amuse or interest her, visions of her own creation haunted and depressed her; and so stimulants were resorted to, to keep up her spirits, in consequence of which her nerves became excited and unstrung, so that she could not sleep. Opiates, therefore, and anodynes, were administered. And thus a false of the system was produced.

Dr. Maxwell, however, pronounced her state a favorable one; and the birth of a fine little girl appeared as proof positive of his assertion. The "mother and child," it was said, "were doing remarkably well;" and Susan seemed so happy, that all were delighted to look upon her. Stimulants, to be sure, were still administered; but 'it was necessary on account of her great weakness;' and at night, and even during the day, opiates were also resorted to, in order to calm her nerves, or compose her to sleep.

Days passed—a week—and little Frances, named for papa and grandpapa, was the idol of the circle. "She was so beautiful, her features so regular, her head so finely-shaped, her hair *almost* curling, and her eyes so deeply blue." Frank was delighted, and mortified, too; for his fears had thus been proved unfounded; and he was ashamed to recall, even to his own memory, his late conversations with Dr. Harris.

"Frank," said Susan one morning, beckoning him to approach, and pointing to the infant upon her

arm, "do you not think there is something strange in the expression of her eyes?"

"No, she is sleepy."

Susan hesitated a moment, and then whispered, "I fear the nurse gives her paregoric, to make her sleep."

"Oh! no, she would not do such a thing; besides, Mrs. Williams is almost always with her, and would soon discover it."

"She looks strangely to me," said Susan.

"It is only your anxiety about her."

But a mother's fears are not easily dispelled; so that when Doctor Maxwell called soon after, she communicated them to him, and then had the infant brought her. But the doctor laughed and said, "The child is bright enough, but how are you?"

"Not so well, I think; I have such a listless feeling."

"Oh, that is very natural; it is the reaction after so much excitement. You have seen too many friends, perhaps."

"It is not only that," returned Susan; "I feel as if I were growing weaker every day."

"Mrs. Williams, what is your opinion?" asked the doctor, appealing to a pleasant-looking lady who, having been from her youth a friend to Susan's mother, had kindly offered to stay with her during her sickness, and thus relieve her of all care.

"I do not see any change myself," she answered; "but Susan has complained several times of these feelings."

"It is only nervousness," returned the doctor; "I will write a new perscription for her."

Which he accordingly did; but it seemed of little service, for it soon became apparent to all that Susan really was very much weaker. Poor Frank observed it with a shudder. What if, after all, he had been right? Mrs. Williams, too, wished more than ever that her own physician, Dr. Martin, were in attendance, "she should have so much more confidence!" Therefore, Frank and Susan both felt that, as she had been so kind and attentive, it would only be polite to call him in for consultation.

It was late at night when this step was decided upon. But now Susan appeared so ill to her anxious friends, that they felt it impossible to wait until the morning, and Frank hastened himself to see Doctor Maxwell, and solicit an immediate consultation. But the doctor had just been "called away, and was not expected back for some hours." There was nothing, therefore, left for him to do but to seek Doctor Martin, and procure his attendance.

Mrs. Williams met him with awakened hope. She "was so sure that all would now be right;" and his first prescription seemed to verify her words, for Susan soon after fell into a gentle sleep.

The next morning Dr. Maxwell called earlier than usual, saying that "as Susan *was so well*, he would take advantage of Doctor Martin's visit, and leave her to his care, as he was himself very anxious to pay a visit to an aged parent, of whose illness he had just heard."

Thus was an arrangement made which particularly suited the wishes of all. Susan especially was well pleased, for it afforded her another opportunity of expressing her fears regarding her infant.

Upon Doctor Martin's second visit, therefore, she begged that he would notice it carefully, as "she had been for some days very anxious about her."

"Does she cry much?" asked the doctor of the nurse.

"Yes, sir, for the last day or two she has cried a great deal."

"Oh, well, give her a drop of laudanum in cold water every two hours; that will quiet her. She certainly looks very well."

Frank's heart sank within him. Laudanum to an infant! But Mrs. Williams was "certain that the doctor could not be wrong," and so the anxious father was silenced. But his fears, now thoroughly aroused, soon directed his attention to the rapidly failing Susan, whose appetite was entirely gone, and who had scarcely power to lift her hand. Three days, however, dragged heavily along, before the doctor intimated any doubts of her recovery.

"Her disease is a hidden one," he said, "and had baffled his discovery. He was, therefore, working in the dark, and would now like a consultation of physicians, for the purpose of deciding what was the difficulty."

Frank listened in silence and in anguish. How much time had then been lost! His purpose was now settled. The consultation was at once declined; and immediately upon the departure of the doctor, he wrote him a note, informing him of his intention to change the treatment, and make a trial of Homœopathy; an arrangement to which Mrs. Williams acquiesced with tearful eyes, for Dr. Martin had

in confidence expressed more decidedly to her his fears concerning Susan.

Dr. Harris was just stepping into his carriage as Frank accosted him; but, struck with his pale and disheartened appearance, he turned at once into his office, saying, "You have no bad news to comunicate, I trust?"

"My only hope is in you," said Frank. "Will you come with me?"

"Certainly; any relief or assistance that I can afford, you are welcome to. But what is the difficulty?"

The above particulars were quickly related by Frank, and the doctor at once led the way to his carriage. "Do not be so distressed," he said; "all may yet be well."

"But if it should be otherwise, I never should forgive myself," said Frank.

"Life and death are not in our hands," returned the doctor. "Our office is merely to relieve and alleviate. We can never save when a decree of death has gone forth; let that comfort you."

A few moments afterwards, they entered the sick-chamber, where the doctor at once ordered more air and light to be admitted. "You must be a little more cheerful," he said; and then, approaching the bed, he leaned for a time unobservedly over Susan, evidently examining her emaciated features with a practised eye.

"You are very weak to-day, your husband tells me," he at length said.

Susan slowly lifted her eyes; but the words she would have uttered, died upon her lips.

"Are you in any pain?" now asked the doctor, and again Susan's lips moved as in reply; but no sound escaped them.

"It is important that I should hear her answer," the doctor now said to Mrs. Williams, who stood upon the opposite side of the bed. "You are more accustomed to her voice, and may understand her more readily."

Mrs. Williams bowed her assent; and stooping down to Susan, said, "The doctor wishes to know if you are in any pain?"

But she, too, failed to catch the faint whisper; and the doctor moved disappointedly from the bed.

"What medicines have been given her?" he now asked of Frank.

"Their name is Legion," he answered bitterly, leading the way to a table upon which stood a multitude of half-emptied phials.

"Quite a display, certainly," said the doctor, "and a very useful one to me; for they explain in part what seemed so singular. Mrs. Clifford's original complaint, I see, has been superseded by another, that is a medicinal one, of which she must first be cured, before the other can be attended to."

"You think, then, there is hope?" asked Frank, in a trembling voice.

"There is always hope while there is life," returned the doctor, evasively. But seeing Frank's increased agitation, and fearing that he might be misled by the remark, and infer more than he had intended, he continued: "I cannot say that Mrs. Clifford is in no danger, for her situation is an extremely critical

one. I do not, however, by any means despair of her recovery; and hope that in a day or two there will be a favorable change. But you must have patience; our cures, you know, are generally very gradual. Your infant, you say, is well?" he added, turning to depart.

"No, I fear not; she cries incessantly, and is growing very thin. Will you see her?"

"If you wish it;" and the doctor followed him as he spoke, into the adjoining chamber. But as he gazed upon the child, his hopeful expression faded. "What have you been giving her?" he asked of the nurse.

"Only what Dr. Martin ordered," she answered pertly.

"Well, and what was that?"

"Barley water, and sometimes milk, and a drop of laudanum occasionally, when she cries."

"Laudanum!" exclaimed the doctor, in astonishment. "Poor child! her life will be the forfeit. But do not grieve," he continued, turning to Frank; "a pure and heavenly world is opening before her. Never weep for the soul that departs without spot or blemish!"

The doctor's opinion in both cases proved correct; for at the end of two days, Susan's returning consciousness filled her friends with joy, while it became apparent to all that her lovely infant's days were numbered.

We pass in silence over its sufferings, death, and quiet burial — those penalties required of its frail humanity; which, when it had paid, the freed spirit winged its heavenward flight, nor paused till in the

arms of Him who has said, "Of such is the kingdom of Heaven."

"Riddle of destiny, who can show
What thy short visit meant, or know
What thy errand here below?"

CHAPTER SIXTEENTH.

SUSAN'S recovery was very gradual; and not until several days had elapsed after the first visit of Doctor Harris, were her powers sufficiently restored to reawaken her interest in the world around her. She had been carefully informed from the first of the illness of her child, in order to prepare her for its death; but to the surprise of all, had manifested but little emotion. With returning strength, however, nature resumed her sway, and her maternal anxieties revived.

"Nurse," she said one night after all had retired, "I feel so uneasy about my baby, that I wish you would visit the nursery and see how she is."

The nurse left the room, but it was needless to enter the nursery; that morn the little one had been laid in her narrow bed.

"The babe sleeps quietly," she said, now returning; for she had been charged not to betray the truth.

"Is she in her nurse's arms?" asked Susan.

"No, she is in her bed."

A half hour passed, and the sleepless Susan again spoke.

"Nurse, I am so nervous to-night; will you see again if the baby sleeps?"

The same answer was returned as before; and again and again was it repeated, for Susan could not sleep, and her little one was heavy upon her heart.

The next morning Frank was told of the circumstance; and consulting Doctor Harris, was advised by him at once to inform her of the truth, as every day, imparting to her frame new strength and hope, would but increase the keenness of her sorrow.

It was a great trial for Frank, for his own heart was full of grief. But he felt that the doctor had judged correctly; and nerving himself for the task, he immediately sought her bedside. As he hesitated, uncertain how to introduce the subject, Susan herself opened the conversation.

"They tell me," she said, "that baby is too sick to be brought across the entry. Is she, then, so *very* sick?"

"She *has been* very sick," said Frank in a trembling voice; "but her sufferings are all over now. She will hereafter know neither pain nor sorrow, so that *our* loss will be *her* gain."

Susan closed her eyes, making no answer; which so much surprised Frank, who had anticipated a burst of excessive feeling, that he would almost have doubted if she understood him, had not her subsequent silence respecting the child convinced him of the contrary.

"It is well," said Doctor Harris, when informed of the result; "her distress will be so gradual now as not to injure her."

But that night Susan did not sleep, nor the next, nor the ensuing one, although the doctor tried his utmost skill.

"Give me a little morphine to-night," said Susan, "the hours are *so very* long."

"So they doubtless are," said the doctor, "but not so injurious in their weariness as the effects of that same anodyne would be."

"Why so?"

"Because to-morrow night it must be repeated, and perhaps the next, and the next."

"And why not? I have taken it for months."

"And have you been well?"

The inference was conclusive, and Susan acquiesced in his decision. But that night, too, was long and wearisome.

"Open the windows, nurse, and let me look upon the clear sky and shining stars. 'Tis long since I have seen them, and they will be to me as the return of lost friends."

And so they proved; for they soothed her aching heart, and told of bright realms beyond, and Susan murmured no longer.

But this was not sufficient to satisfy the doctor. Sleep was necessary to her; for without it she could not improve. "It is very strange," he said, upon the evening of the seventh day; "do you *try* to sleep?"

"Yes," said Susan; "but I have been so long accustomed to the use of morphine, that I am confident I shall never sleep without it."

Doctor Harris smiled and shook his head. "In the whole course of my practice," he said, "I have never once administered it, and least of all would I give it to you. But tell me," he continued, taking her hand kindly in his own, "is there nothing upon your mind that troubles you? Such a cause, you know, will frequently baffle our skill."

Susan smiled sadly. "No," she answered, "there is nothing now to be anxious about. I often think I would be happier had I a few more cares and duties."

"Duties!" exclaimed the doctor; "you certainly cannot complain of a deficiency of duties! 'much,' you know, 'is required where much is given.' But my other patients wait," he added, rising; for he saw that he had touched a sensitive chord, and would not weaken the effect; "I hope to hear a better account of you to-morrow."

But hurried as he might have been, he nevertheless found time for a long whisper with Frank. "You must try your best," he said, as he turned away.

It was Susan's habit to be left early to seek her rest; but that night Frank lingered longer than usual, as if loth to leave her.

"Susan," he said, "how much I have to be thankful for in your recovery. Life would have been a barren waste bereft of both my treasures." A slight quivering of Susan's lips betrayed the emotion he awakened, and he continued. "I know it is ungrateful in me after so much mercy, but my heart yearns after our little Frances, she was so beautiful!" He paused, for Susan's arms were thrown around him, and loud sobs burst from her swelling heart.

Long did Frank soothe and comfort her, receiving from her lips the secret anguish which had wrung her bosom; until, exhausted and weary, she sank upon her pillow.

A few gentle strokes upon her forehead, a silent, loving kiss, and he departed, full of hope that this last prescription of the doctor's might prove of the service he had desired — a hope that was fully realized; for Susan, relieved of the weight upon her heart, soon after fell into a gentle and refreshing sleep, from which she did not wake until the morning.

But as one light revived to cheer his heart, another was extinguished; for with the dawn of day Frank received a hasty summons to take a last farewell of an old and honored friend.

CHAPTER SEVENTEENTH.

Mr. Gray, ever thoughtful of the feelings of others, had accompanied Frank to the grave of his little Frances, although the weather was damp and unpleasant, and he at the time was suffering from its effects upon his weakened frame. Upon his return home, he had been sensible of an increase of pain; and had resorted at once to his usual remedies. But the attack was a severe one, and soon assumed a threatening aspect; which, however, had been care-

fully concealed from Frank and Susan, until it became evident that his recovery was hopeless, when Frank, as we have seen, was hastily summoned to his bedside.

As he entered the apartment, Frederick was leaning anxiously over his aged friend, to whom he was repeating the words of a hymn which he had a few moments before requested. But as Frank approached, Frederick paused, and said, "Uncle George, here is Frank. Will you not speak to him?"

But Death had set his seal upon his brow, and the dying man heeded not earthly sounds.

"Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord," said Frederick solemnly, as the truth flashed upon him; "for they rest from their labors, and their works do follow them."

Many a moist eye and mournful heart attended the funeral of the departed; for his kindness was proverbial, and friends loved him. His charity was ready and cheerful, and the recipients numerous. Childhood hushed its play, and lisped his name in sadness; while gray-haired men were not ashamed to weep, and mothers looked pityingly upon their children, for they had lost their benefactor and their counsellor.

When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, will it not be said to this good and faithful servant, "Come, thou blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world?"

Verily, inasmuch as he ministered unto one of the least of these his brethren, he ministered unto Christ, and with him shall enter into life eternal.

CHAPTER EIGHTEENTH.

Primrose Hall, so long and widely known as the hospitable mansion of Mr. Gray, was closed and silent. Gone was the spirit which had enlivened it, and well-befitting was its present gloom; for it was now passing into other hands. In a few moments, its new owner would be proclaimed!

In the library, endeared by so many associations to Frederick and Frank, they now sat, in obedience to the written request of Mr. Gray, that they would be present at the reading of his will, which was to be opened immediately after the funeral ceremonies. Frank felt that the wealth that would probably now be his, was of little value in comparison with the kind words and smiles of the friend he had lost; while Frederick's heart still swelled with the emotions that had been excited while officiating at his burial. In evident abstraction they awaited the conclusion of what was to them a painful scene. But far otherwise was it with Mr. Clifford, now himself tottering upon the borders of the grave; for with a pale and anxious countenance he sat next to Mr. Chauncey, who, having drawn up the document, was now the reader of it.

A catalogue of the various possessions of the deceased was first to be gone through, which proved a long and tedious recital to all but the money-loving

Mr. Clifford, who drank in eagerly the full description, and minutest particulars.

Then followed the legacies. Not large sums to missionary societies, which would sound his name abroad throughout the land; not donations for college and seminary professorships, to perpetuate his memory by being called after him; not gifts to already existing and *flourishing* charitable institutions: but small annuities to the infirm and friendless; timely presents to the widows and the fatherless; even the erring and the weak were invited to penitence by the encouraging remembrance. None were forgotten; a mere trifle could impart happiness to many—and they *were* happy, and in thankful hearts embalmed the memory of the giver!

One remaining clause completed the document. It was as follows:

"The rest and residue of the property, of whatsoever kind and description, to be equally divided into two portions; the one bequeathed, with my best affections, to Frank and Susan Clifford; the other to my equally beloved friends, Frederick and Mary Harvey."

Mr. Clifford, in visible agitation, arose and paced the room; but Frank sat pale and motionless, evidently surprised and disappointed; while a burning flush crimsoned the cheeks and brow of the astonished Frederick.

A deep silence prevailed throughout the room, during which Mr. Chauncey busied himself in looking over his papers.

"Here are four letters," he at length said, "written and directed by Mr. Gray himself. One to each of

you, gentlemen, and the remaining one to Mr. Selden in New York, containing some explanation of the will, he told me."

As he handed them to their owners, Mr. Clifford thrust his hastily into his pocket, as if to avoid a public perusal of it, and soon after departed; a movement which was followed by Mr. Chauncey, as soon as he had made arrangements for their next meeting. Thus were the young men left to themselves.

"Frank," said Frederick, rising and offering him his hand, "this disposition of the property, I assure you, has been as great a surprise to me as it can possibly be to you."

"I believe it," said Frank, returning the pressure, "and I do not know that I regret it, although at first it surprised and disappointed me, for the love of money is of rapid growth."

"Not in your case, or you could not so generously express yourself."

Frank shook his head. "Frederick," he said, "my life has been a failure; I feel it every day and hour, an unsettled, aimless existence, productive of no good to myself or to others. Hampered and tied down as I have been by my father's respect of wealth and fashion, I am not the half of what I might have been."

"Why, then," said Frederick, catching at so favorable an opportunity to give the advice that had often trembled upon his lips, "why will you not throw off its shackles, and be the man that nature and your Creator intended you should be?"

"Because I cannot; it is too late."

"Not too late if you have the will. You forget how young a man you are."

"Not so *very* young; do you know that I am nearly thirty? and who ever commences a profession then? Besides, I have become so accustomed to the frivolities and indolence of fashionable life, that I never could persevere either in the preparatory study which would be necessary, or submit to the restraints and annoyances of a practising physician."

"There has been your mistake," said Frederick. "You are not called upon to practise a profession, and would be wasting both your time and energies in the attempt. There is nothing elevating or ennobling in a profession of itself; and no man of wealth should so despise his opportunities as to tie himself down to a common treadmill existence. Professions are only suitable for men who have no better means of maintaining themselves. Not but that many who are rich do practise them; but they have invariably been men trained to the business in early life, before coming into possession of their fortunes, and are, therefore, so accustomed to its routine, that it has become a second nature."

"What, then, would you have me do?" asked Frank.

"Elevate your aims, cultivate your tastes, associate with men of high endowments, wherever they may be found, bringing them forward if hidden or obscured, and the world will bless you for their widespread light. Encourage the fine arts, by an appreciation of their excellencies, and the artists by your countenance and praise, your timely introduction, and as timely assistance. Thus may your wealth

and leisure be productive of the greatest benefit to mankind. Truly a noble work is before you!"

Frederick had spoken with warmth, for this was a subject of deep interest to him, as the life that would have suited his own natural taste and inclination; and Frank felt that it was kindly and wisely done.

A new existence already opened before him, and gratefully he followed the guiding hand.

CHAPTER SEVENTEENTH.

"Seest thou yon lovely cottage in the grove,
With little garden neatly planned before,
Its roof deep shaded by the elms above,
Moss-grown, and decked with velvet verdure o'er?
Go lift the willing latch, the scene explore;
Sweet peace, and love, and joy, thou there shalt find,
For there religion dwells, whose sacred lore
Leaves the proud wisdom of the world behind,
And pours a heavenly ray on every human mind."

Such was the dwelling into which wealth had entered, fraught with temptations and responsibilities.

Frederick welcomed it as a summons to his work, as his breast-plate and shield; for in wealth there is power, and influence, and liberty. The world was before him, a plentiful harvest awaited him, and he hastened, though with fear and trembling, to reap its fruits; while his mother offered up her thanksgivings,

with fervent prayers that his stewardship might prove judicious. But Mary, the affectionate wife and mother, shrank from the new life it presented to her, and clung fondly to her present peaceful and quiet home.

"We have been so happy here!" she said.

"And shall be happy elsewhere," said Frederick. "It is not place nor circumstance that creates happiness, but a pure spirit and a grateful heart."

Mary's eyes had filled with tears, through which she now looked fondly up, her smile as the bright sunshine after the refreshing shower. "With you and these," she said, pointing to her little ones, "life will indeed be happy everywhere."

Their conversation had been a long one; and so engrossed had Frederick been, that he had entirely forgotten the letter handed to him by Mr. Chauncey. But now suddenly remembering it, he took it from his pocket, and explaining to his mother and Mary how it had come into his possession, read as follows:

"DEAR FREDERICK: — The lamp of life is almost spent, and yet I have much to tell you before the flickering flame expires. First let me say that you are very dear to me, also your mother and your wife; although, while surrounded by comforts, and rolling as you may have thought, in wealth, I have been apparently unmindful of your increasing cares and perplexities. Yet this has been very far from the fact, for I have ever watched over you with a father's eye, and a father's love; and had it been necessary, would have proved it by my actions. And here let me thank you all, that notwithstanding my hand has

been empty, and my purse closed, when I entered your dwelling, you have ever paid me the same rich tribute as formerly, of affection and respect. For this I thank and bless you; for it has smoothed my downward path, and been as precious ointment upon my head.

"And now let me revert to years long past, when Frank, and Ellen and Mary, Harry Selden and yourself, gathered around my chair, climbed upon my knee, or hung upon my neck, bright, joyous children! Then it was I learned to love you! Then it was that a fountain of tenderness sprung up within my hitherto lonely heart, which has ever preserved it fresh and young.

"I pass over the many succeeding years, during which I earnestly strove to keep you happy and virtuous; for they presented one unchanging scene of harmony and joy. But a shadow fell across our path, blighting the budding hopes of Harry and Ellen. It was my first anxiety, and I spared no pains to gain Mr. Clifford's consent to their union; but neither entreaties nor promises availed anything, for a deeply-rooted aversion to Harry had arisen in his mind. All, therefore, that remained within my power was to sympathize in their griefs, and fan their hopes. This I did, but their disappointment weighed heavily upon my heart.

"You may imagine, then, my sorrow, when the same dark destiny seemed hovering over Mary and yourself. It was to avert this catastrophe that, as you may remember, I prevailed upon you to postpone your visit until I should first see Mr. Clifford, and

use my influence in your favor. But my task was difficult; for although the chief objection raised was your want of fortune, an objection I at once removed by intimating my long-formed intention to bequeath to you a large portion of my property, this very fact angered him beyond reason with me.

"I speak plainly, for it is necessary to explain the causes which led to the proceeding which followed, and which has, in so many instances, restricted my benevolence, and restrained (even upon the occasion of your marriage,) my impulsive feelings.

"Mr. Clifford accused me of deceit and treachery, saying, that by my not having contradicted the opinion generally entertained and expressed by our friends and acquaintances of my intention to make Susan my sole heir, he had consented to Frank's union with her, and, therefore, considered me bound in honor to make her such. Warm words passed between us, and I arose to leave him, when Mr. Clifford, fearful of depriving Mary of her portion without in the least benefiting Frank, proposed that I should draw up a paper, promising to divide my property, amounting to a certain sum, equally between Frank and yourself, upon which condition he agreed to give his consent to your engagement. I hesitated, for Ellen and Harry were dear children to me. But Harry I believed to be engaged to the Southern heiress, and Ellen, I saw, was becoming, as formerly, the object of her father's worship. He would not, therefore, let her want; and as it was your and Mary's only chance of happiness, I acceded to the proposal, and drew up the paper,

"But when, a few weeks after, the return of Harry, and Ellen's subsequent illness, led to their ultimate marriage, my heart reproached me for my apparent forgetfulness of them, the seeming injustice of which preyed upon my spirits; for my health at the time was so infirm, that I had little hope of my life being prolonged a sufficient number of years to enable me to amass any thing from my income. But this I attempted, and this I have accomplished; not to a very large amount, it is true, but sufficient to show my remembrance and affection of them. And now, with a full and cheerful heart, I comply with my written promise, and bequeath you, with blessings upon you all, the wealth which, in your hands, will not be misplaced, and which you so richly deserve.

"That God may bless you with wisdom from on high, and take your family under his guardian care, is the fervent prayer of

"Your affectionate friend,

"GEORGE GRAY."

CHAPTER TWENTIETH.

FREDERICK'S plans were soon matured, for his aim was single and direct, his opinions established, and his views distinct. Therefore, when the power to *act* was given him, his onward path was quickly chosen. The humble cottage was at once exchanged for the city residence, and a large hall was prepared, where the word of God could be preached in its simplicity and truth, unfettered by a vestry, by deacons, or by *influential* church members.

The work of his life was about to commence. He would scatter the good seed with no sparing hand, and the poor should at length have the Gospel, the *glad* tidings of salvation, preached to them! A subdued joy beamed from his countenance, and none doubted his happiness. But Mary, why did she move so listlessly about her new home, and droop her head when unseen and alone?

One evening, after all had retired save Frederick, who was absent, and for whom she waited, she sat melancholy and sad in their now handsome parlor, her work lay unheeded at her feet, her hands idle upon her lap, her eyes fixed vacantly upon the bright coals in the burning grate. It was a strange mood for the hitherto cheerful wife; and Frederick, as he entered unobserved, stood rooted to the spot. For a few moments he gazed anxiously upon her, and then

silently approaching, leaned over and pressed his lips to her troubled brow.

"Why so sad and wo-begone?" he asked.

But his address was so sudden, and his manner so tender, that Mary could not, as she had lately done, control the rising tears, which soon flowed freely. Frederick's playful manner at once disappeared; something, he saw, more serious than mere loneliness had oppressed her. Taking his seat, therefore, beside her, he wound his arm fondly about her, and soothed her with soft caresses.

"Mary," he at length said, as she still lay sobbing in his arms, "I fear I have been very selfish in the course I have pursued. You have always been so gentle and yielding, that I foolishly fancied that your happiness was centred in mine; I see my error, and regret that I have been so led astray. Do not think," he said, interrupting her as she would have spoken, "that I mean to blame you; I do not. Your life is as valuable to you as mine can be to me, and should be so. It is I who have selfishly overlooked the fact. But remember, dearest, that my plans need in no way interfere with yours. I ask neither sacrifice nor assistance from you."

"Indeed, Frederick, you wrong me. Willingly would I do any thing to assist and forward your wishes; it is my want of fitness for the work that troubles me; my incapacity to share your labors. It is this inferiority that has humbled and depressed me. Your views of life are so much more exalted and elevated than are mine."

Frederick smiled as he pressed her to his bosom. "It is your head and not your heart, I see, that is at

fault. You forget the difference that exists between us; I could no more rival you in the nursery, the sick-room, or the pantry, than you can me in the pulpit or the crowded thoroughfare. The work of both, however, is necessary, even as the rose-tinted hue of the rainbow is as necessary to perfect its beauty as the gorgeous crimson."

"That is all very true," said Mary, still despondingly; "and I knew and felt it such in our other home; but here it is different, I am ashamed to tell you, how *very* different."

"This is a confessional of love, remember, where there need be no shame, for sympathy destroys censure."

"Well, then," said Mary, lifting the fringed lashes that lay upon her blushing cheeks, "to tell the truth, I have lost all relish for my former occupations. When there was a necessity to tend the children, patch their clothes, and superintend the housework, I felt these to be my duties, and was happy in the performance of them; but now they have become tasteless and tiresome to me,"

"Leave them to the servants, then, and enjoy your books for awhile, as you have long wished to do."

Mary shook her head. "I have tried it," she said; "but now that I have the leisure, I have lost the inclination."

"You are a good illustration, I see," said Frederick, smiling, "of my favorite theory, that no conscientious, upright mind, can be satisfied but in the performance of some duty, real or imaginary. But do not fear; every situation has its duties, and you

will soon find yours out. The process you are going through is a very natural one, for we must always shake off the old garment before we put on the new. Let things take their course, and your head, and heart, and hands, will soon be busy in their work."

Frederick was right, for the next day many friends called upon Mary, partly from old affection, and partly from curiosity, whose questions, although guarded and indirect, soon roused her from her despondency. She saw that she was in a position where her words and opinions would be weighed, and might be repeated, perhaps even to the discredit and injury of her husband, who was now felt to be a man of mark. This conviction lent firmness to her timidity, and dignity to her gentleness; so that all went away wondering how she could have preserved, and even so much improved her manners, away from all society. They did not consider how much the mind and heart have to do with the outward bearing!

Mary, too, was conscious of her success, and pleased at the ability she had displayed in answering or in parrying their questions; and the hope sprang up within her heart, that even to her acquaintances she might not be useless; and with a lighter step than usual, she prepared for her morning visit to her mother.

This had hitherto been a dreaded task; for Mrs. Clifford, fast sinking into her grave, was even less interesting than formerly. She had lived solely for her husband, and for herself; and now that she needed sympathy, had no one from whom to seek it, for Mr. Clifford was too much engrossed in his own

disappointments to heed her fretful demands upon his time and affection; and her children she had too much neglected to ask for, or even to desire, their society.

Mary had known this to be the case, and therefore her visits had been cold and unsatisfactory; but now that she sought to discover even her remotest duty, this, her nearest and most binding one, became plain to her. She thought of the days of her childhood, and fancied what those of her infancy had been; and she determined that this helpless mother's happiness should be her care. Her voice unconsciously softened, her attentions were more particular; and she went away sensible that an answering change had taken place in the lone woman's heart, for she tremblingly kissed her upon parting, and begged "that she would soon come again."

Mary regretted to leave her, yet an engagement to dine with Susan compelled her departure. But she was late, and consequently found Susan disappointed and nervous. "I have been looking for you the whole morning," she said. Her cheek was flushed, and her manner betrayed an unwonted degree of excitement. Mary noticed it; and after taking off her bonnet, seated herself beside her, and gently led her to unburden her troubled mind. "She was so lonely and so wretched," she said. "Her mother, her children, and Uncle George, all taken from her, and now Frank was growing negligent; he did not stay with her as formerly, but had taken to his books, and picking up odd acquaintances among poor artists, and poets, and authors. She wished she could die, and be with those who had so loved her."

Thus were Mary's consolations again called for, and her advice required. Susan was weak, and must be encouraged; she had been so petted and indulged, that gentler and wiser teachings than Frank could give, were requisite to guide her steps. But before they parted, she poured forth her heartfelt thanks to Mary for the good she had done her, and said how much she depended "upon *her* help to rescue her from despair."

Truly, Mary's situation had its duties, and she had found them out.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIRST.

The years of seclusion spent by Frederick in his humble cottage, in want and self-denial, had not been neglected or misused. Prevented by the "Odium Theologicum," which attached to his name, from preaching the gospel of Christ, he had employed the time in strengthening and confirming himself in the "truth as it is in Jesus"—for this purpose pushing his investigations into every department of philosophy and science bearing upon theology. The study of the German language, then a rare accomplishment, but now a necessity of the theologian, opened to his inquiring mind a wider field of speculation than he had ever before dreamed of. Eagerly and gratefully he had seized

upon the materials provided by the indefatigable research and perseverance of the German mind, until the truth streamed in floods of light upon his soul, illuminating much that had hitherto been dark and obscure.

The Eternal Word made manifest in the flesh, the union of God with man, assumed a new understanding in his mind, and became dearer to him than ever; and he was proportionately anxious to lift the veil from the darkened souls around him. But difficulties at first seemed to menace his purpose with defeat. How could he give strong meat to minds whose only nourishment hitherto had been milk? But his "strengthened consciousness of God" enabled him to overcome even this obstacle; and so to preach that all were struck with the gentle and persuasive words of truth that fell from his lips, and with his simple and unaffected manner.

Very naturally, however, his audiences were small the first few Sabbaths of his untrammelled ministry; for although many were curious, and even anxious to attend, a few only of his most particular friends and acquaintances, ventured to take so questionable a step. Chance strangers, therefore, and some few earnest spirits who felt themselves drawn to the young preacher who formerly, at the Calvinistic church, had awakened their attention, and riveted their affections, composed his principal auditors. But Frederick was not discouraged; for he had no desire to create an undue excitement, and was not ambitious of being surrounded by a crowd, his object being merely to lead and instruct inquiring minds, those who were "hungered and athirst;" and he did not

doubt that such would sooner or later gather around him.

And he was right; for each succeeding Sabbath showed a gradually increasing attendance, until in a few months it became evident that the hall prepared could not accommodate the numerous applicants with seats.

Frequent, therefore, were the propositions made to him to build up a church, after the usual manner, and to become its settled pastor. But he invariably rejected them; maintaining that a minister who was in any degree responsible to his congregation, could not, however unconscious he might be of the fact, preach with as much freedom, or effect as great an amount of spiritual good, as one who was wholly independent.

Neither did he wish any of that form or ceremony which of late had become the whited sepulchres of dead faith, and lifeless hearts. A plain hall, and as plain a worship, holding forth no opportunity for display to the proud and carnal-minded, would, he assured them, soon sift the chaff from the wheat, and leave the building to those for whom it had been designed. And Frederick's words were verified; for as the novelty wore off, many, too uncultivated to perceive the rich beauties of a simple religion, returned once more to those observances and ceremonies which from their youth they had been accustomed to revere, and to the dogmatical discussions and sectarian prejudices which they had so long looked upon as the pillars of their salvation.

Thus was Frederick's little band freed from the tares that would have outgrown and overshadowed

them, had it not been for his wise foresight. His first care now was to elevate their aspirations, and to make them *think;* think of who and what they were, what their talents and their opportunities, what the work appointed them to do, and whether they were rightly performing it. Love to God and man was the "key-note of his theme," and Christ the bright exemplar for their imitation.

But not here did Frederick pause in his efforts of usefulness. The poor were his dependants, and the erring his brethren. He never forgot their common humanity; but visited them in person, and plead with them against their sins. The *promises*, and not the threatenings of Holy Writ, were cited to them; they were told of the *good*, and not the evil, that ran through their natures, and encouraged to reformation. Neither were their bodily wants forgotten, as is too often the case, in religious zeal. Gifts were almost necessary to win their confidence; and a support for the body an almost requisite step to the growth of piety. Sewing-circles, as they now exist, he thought of comparatively little service; not but that much good was done by them, but not the greatest amount of good, or of the most efficient character. For charity, unaccompanied by the kind word and encouraging smile, loses more than half of its true benefit. And so other means were devised by which their necessities, both moral and physical, could be reached and supplied.

Mrs. Harvey had long been a tried and efficient friend to the suffering; and well did she know the comforts they needed, and the best means of supplying them; for straitened as her own circumstances

had been, it had required much thought and care so to expend her mite as most effectually to relieve their wants. Upon her, therefore, the ladies called for advice as upon one whose experience might prove valuable to them in their efforts to alleviate suffering and distress. Nor were they disappointed, as with full hearts and overflowing eyes they listened to the many personal incidents she recounted for their benefit, and the touching pictures of poverty relieved, which she drew to excite their interest and sympathy.

With such instructions, and with such an instructress, it is not to be wondered at that in a few months many despairing hearts were gladdened, and hitherto pale and anxious faces wreathed in smiles; while fervent prayers were offered up from grateful hearts for the kind and active benefactors of the poor

CHAPTER TWENTY-SECOND.

While Frederick thus labored for the good of many, earning for himself an eternal and unfading crown of glory, Harry Selden was winning golden opinions from the world, and advancing with rapid strides to the distinctions and honors upon which his gaze was fixed. Already had he risen to the head of his profession, and been acknowledged by all as the leading member of the bar. But such local

praise, and so confined a sphere, did not satisfy his ambition, and he plunged eagerly into the exciting whirlpool of politics. Ellen sighed, for with a true woman's foresight she looked into the vista of futurity, and was not so dazzled by the glare and success of to-day as to overlook the naturally short-lived favor of the people, nor so blinded as not to foresee the customary evil effect upon mind and heart. She thus writes in her diary: —

"*October 7th.* — To-day seals Harry's fate. If successful in his election, a political career opens before him with its necessary wear and tear. Farewell the quiet home! the evening fireside! the serene spirit! the untarnished name!"

"*October 9th.* — Harry has gained his election, and is so much elated, and has been so warmly congratulated by his friends and acquaintances, that I cannot but sympathise in his happiness, and hope that my fears and doubts are without foundation. My heart is, nevertheless, heavy, though silent; as when at sea a storm gathers around us. We know that the ship is strong; but so are the waves. The captain faithful and experienced; but we are afloat upon an inconstant element. Are not the waves of political excitement alike insatiable? Are not wisdom, and honor, and even private worth, too often swallowed up in their depths? The downward tendency of a political life is fearfully great. Heaven preserve us from its ruin!"

As we glance over the pages of Ellen's diary, there

is so much to interest and beguile us, that we find it difficult to leave one flower unplucked. But our limits will not allow of too copious extraction, and we, therefore, pass over intervening months and years, and take up the thread of her life at —

"*November* 16*th*, 18—. —Mary's fifteenth birth-day. God bless thee, my child! may thy future path be as smooth and flowery as has been thy past! But can this be? No; the days of thy childhood, with its innocence, and trust, and hope, are closing upon you, and a treacherous world welcomes you upon its stage. Mayest thou shun thy mother's faults, and thus escape her trials!"

"*November* 17*th*. — Mary's party last evening was most rechérché, and she bore her honors well. So beautiful and pure! many say she is like her mother; and so she may be in feature, but those tender eyes and placid smiles bespeak a different nature, more like that of my gentle sister, whom, God grant, she may resemble in her hope and faith!"

"*November* 20*th*. — Friends all congratulate me upon Harry's appointment to a foreign mission, saying that it is but the precursor of greater dignity. But the heart knoweth its own bitterness. Our ascent so far has been gradual and sure; but the heights will be growing giddy, and the aim of enemies more certain; and the fall, if it comes, will be the greater. But why do I thus blight the present with dark forebodings of the future? Because love is anxious and fearful. Honors, too, have not added to our happiness, for the cry is ever

onward! onward! no rest, no contentment, exciting speeches, and sleepless nights, party strife, and personal enmity, make up the sum and substance of our life."

"*November* 21*st.*—I have been doing my best to dwell upon the advantages which may result from this appointment abroad, so as to pluck the flowers with the thorn, and many have already peeped forth from their hiding-places to greet me; for Mary will thus acquire an European polish, and, what is even more desirable, will thus escape those neutral years which so ruffle the feelings, and try the temper of an American girl and her mother, when she is too far advanced in character and attainments to be styled a child, and yet too young in years to be treated as a woman. My boys, too, will reap a rich harvest of foreign ideas, and acquire from observation far more knowledge of the world in which they live, than even years of reading could impart."

"*November* 23*d.*—Harry proposes to leave George and Frank at school; but this I cannot consent to. How well it is that I have not so many children as Mary, for I then could not take them all, nor would I willingly leave one."

"*December* 1*st.*—I do not know what is the matter with me, but I cannot rouse myself, and wish most earnestly that we had no thought of going abroad. A weight seems settling upon my brain."

"*December* 9*th.*—I shall never get through this

business of preparation. Every exertion tires me, and I could cry all the day long. Oh! 'I'm a weary, I'm a weary.'"

"*December 15th.*—My packing both for home and abroad is nearly completed, but my head aches most terribly; I cannot throw off a sensation of stupidity. It is so unusual, that I fear I must be sick."

And so, indeed, she was. That night there was much running to and fro, and for three months her sufferings were great; until at length exhausted nature could bear no more, and Frederick and Mary were summoned from their home to give and receive the last tokens of affection.

CHAPTER TWENTY-THIRD.

One evening, as Mary was smoothing back the hair from Ellen's forehead, she said, "Mary, do you remember how often, when I was a lazy girl, you used to write my compositions while I lay upon the bed dictating? Will you resume the task, and write a few *last* lines for me?"

A kiss upon her brow from trembling lips was her only answer.

"In yonder book-case," she resumed, "you will

find a pile of blank books; they contain the journal of my wedded life. The upper volume is the last, and the one that I would write in."

Mary rose and brought the book; but as she opened it, one leaf only remained unwritten.

"That is well," said Ellen; "that leaf will complete the scene." She paused a moment, while Mary prepared her pen and ink. "Are you ready?" she asked.

Mary bowed her assent.

"Write the day of the month."

And Mary wrote as she dictated.

"*April 16th.*—Three months have I spent upon a couch of pain; and now, before the silver chord is loosed, or the golden bowl is broken, I would fain add the weight of my testimony to that of the wise preacher who saith, 'Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.' My life has been a misguided one; while supposing that I was merely fulfilling my highest duties in loving my husband and children, I have made idols of them, giving them the *first* placé in my heart. Thus have I been tossed upon the waves of trouble and anxiety, instead of resting calmly upon the promises of Him who hath said, 'Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee.' The world, too, has been a snare and temptation to me, against which I have scarcely struggled, and yet I have flattered myself that all was right. God be praised! that he did not cut me off in the midst of my delusion, but has generously led me upon my bed of suffering to a knowledge of my error. We have duties to our God and to ourselves, which cannot be put aside or made subservient to minor ones without

injury and loss. The due cultivation of our *spiritual* nature is a necessary condition of a *perfect* life."

As Mary closed the book, Frederick and Harry entered.

"You are just in time," said Ellen; "the day is drawing to its close. Pray with us, Frederick, before we part."

Frederick's prayer was touching and beautiful, offered for both the living and the dying; and when he ended, Ellen thanked him. "You have strengthened me," she said, "for the dark valley."

She then begged that her children might be called, to each of whom she bade a tender farewell; and then, speaking to them all together, said, "Let not external circumstances too much affect you, nor external cares and duties engross you. Remember you have an inner life, whose demands are urgent and unceasing, and of far more importance than those of the casket which it inhabits. Let your thoughts be pure, and your aims exalted, and neither sickness, nor sorrow, nor death, can have dominion over you; for you will then be in possession of that 'peace which passeth understanding.' Speak together of me often; not in tones of mournful sadness, but when the smile is on your lip, and joy sparkles in your eye. Put me not aside as a sacred theme for lonely hours, and darkened spirits; but let me live with you in the bright sunshine of your happiness. Visit my grave, not as a melancholy tribute of respect to my memory, but with a light step and light heart make it your favorite walk, teeming with pleasant, cheerful thoughts of the mother that loves, and will ever love you. To you," she continued, turning to

Harry, "I cannot say farewell. Those whom God has joined together, he will not put asunder; our souls will still be one."

Her voice faltered, and her eyes closed, and so placid was her look, that in breathless silence they hung over her, fearing that the spirit had indeed departed; when suddenly she looked up, with an expression of bright intelligence and hope. "Seraph strains invite me," she exclaimed; "angel voices call me. Ah! this is *life, true life!*"

One fleeting moment, and the perishable casket alone remained to comfort the weeping friends.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOURTH.

We can stand around the bedside of infancy and of old age, and call death a ministering angel, opening wide the portals of Heaven, to spirits glad to enter. But when, in the noon of life, a cherished wife and devoted mother is taken from us, our reason cannot comprehend it; and only by forced submission can we cry, "Thy will, O God, be done."

Thus was it with Ellen's friends; and many months might have been spent by them in fruitless efforts at resignation, and sad memories, had not the ever present duties of life, which are so providentially provided to rouse us into action, compelled them to

control their grief, and take their part "among men and things."

To Harry it was indeed a stunning blow; for Ellen had "done him good, and not evil, all the days of her life; and her price was far above rubies." Gladly would he have shunned the public eye, and sought the consolations of retirement with his children; but this course was denied him. His political friends had exerted themselves to the utmost to advance his interests; and they thought it particularly desirable that he should not resign his mission. Preparations were therefore quickly made for his departure, and for the removal of the boys to the college discipline and influences so lately dreaded by their mother; while Mary accepted gratefully the warm invitation of her aunt, to make one of her own home circle.

And all this was well. But who can number the silent tears, and broken sighs, which succeeding years drew from those orphaned beings? A mother's love, a mother's kiss, a mother's smile, were wanting; and with them the half of life's happiness had vanished! Yet the mother's memory, and her last words, lingered ever about their hearts, and united them to the unseen spirit world, where all is love and harmony.

The parting between the father and his children was a sad one, as they left him upon the deck of the steamer which was to bear him from their sight; and manly tears filled his eyes that evening, as he turned the last lingering look of a yearning heart to the land which contained all that was dear to him. All?

No! a voice seemed to whisper to him from the blue vault of Heaven, and he was comforted.

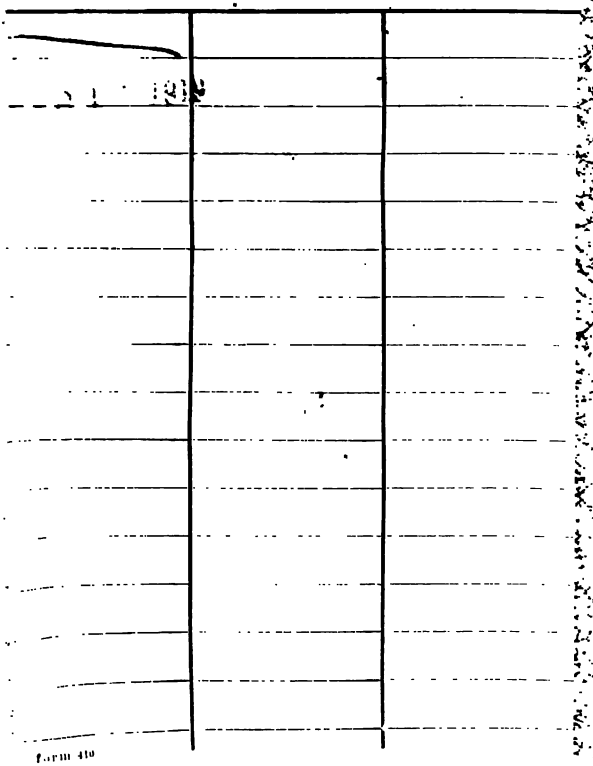
Years passed by, and Harry Selden's career had been a brilliant one; but a shadow rested upon his heart which nothing could dispel. Political life had lost its alluring excitement to him, for he had worn its highest honors, and found them to be as empty bubbles, no sooner grasped than vanished; and now, in his declining years, he turned wearily to seek in severe study, and in the enticements of philosophy, to satisfy the longings of an immortal thirst. Here let us leave him, confident that ere long, in the bitterness of his heart, he will exclaim, that "the tree of knowledge is not that of life."

THE END.



THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY
REFERENCE DEPARTMENT

This book is under no circumstances to be taken from the Building





EW YORK PUBL
REFERENCE DEPAR

book is under no circums
taken from the Build.

